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Monday, 8 January 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Congo	Mr. Ikouebe
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Jenie
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Bader
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security

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07-20384 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Expression of welcome to the new members of the Security Council and of thanks to the outgoing members

The President (*spoke in Russian*): As this is the first meeting of the Security Council this year, I should like to extend my very warm wishes for a fruitful new year to all members of the Council, the United Nations and the staff of the Secretariat.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome the new members: Belgium, Indonesia, Italy, Panama and South Africa. We all look forward to their active participation in the work of the Council. I should also like to take this opportunity to express the Council's deep gratitude to the outgoing members — Argentina, Denmark, Greece, Japan and the United Republic of Tanzania — for their important contributions to the work of the Council.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, Permanent Representative of Qatar, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of December 2006. I am sure that I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Al-Nasser for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Expression of welcome to the Secretary-General and tribute to the outgoing Secretary-General

The President (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the members of the Security Council, I should like to welcome the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, who is taking part in a formal meeting of the Council for the first time in his new capacity. Let me express the hope that the Council will establish the closest and most productive cooperation with the new Secretary-General in carrying out its primary responsibility for strengthening international peace, security and stability.

We should support the Secretary-General's already expressed intention to jointly find ways to resolve current international problems through the collective efforts of all States Members of this universal Organization. We cannot fail to agree with Mr. Ban that no single individual, including the Secretary-General himself, nor any single State, even with the most abundant resources and power, can resolve those problems. Their resolution can be achieved only by strengthening multilateral cooperation and enhancing the role and the effectiveness of United Nations activities, including the activities of the Security Council.

I should like to take this opportunity to express gratitude and pay tribute to Mr. Kofi Annan, who carried out his duties as Secretary-General over the course of many years in a dignified manner.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: Thank you very much, Mr. President, for those kind words. I am honoured to be here, and I thank the President of the Security Council, His Excellency Ambassador Churkin, for this opportunity to meet with the members of the Council in this historic Chamber.

As this is my first meeting with you, let me pay tribute to all Council members and extend, in this new year, my best wishes to all of you for a most successful 2007. In particular, let me acknowledge the presence of the new members, namely, Belgium, Indonesia, Italy, Panama and South Africa, which joined the Council at the same time as I joined the Organization. We have much to learn together.

Allow me to assure all of you of my deep sense of mission, duty and dedication as I assume this high office. You know, perhaps better than anyone else, that I do so at a daunting time in world affairs. The international community faces a range of challenges, from Darfur to the Middle East, and other crises that trouble our world, from defending human rights to the need to move forward in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

I look forward to working closely with the Security Council to ensure that the Organization lives up to the considerable expectations that the international community places on us. As the Council considers the perspectives of the Member States on threats to international peace and security, I am here to listen to all of you.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset, on behalf of the French delegation, to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and to thank the Ambassador of Qatar and his delegation for their conduct of the presidency last month. My delegation would also like to welcome the new members of the Council and to thank those States that left the Council at the end of last year. Finally, I wish to welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and to congratulate him once again on his assumption of his current duties. He can always count on France's full support as he carries out his weighty and demanding, yet exciting, responsibilities.

My delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized today's meeting. It is indeed crucial that the Council be able to begin this dialogue with the Secretary-General so that we can address together the considerable challenges facing the Organization today in the area of peace and security.

Those challenges are increasingly diverse and complex. Armed conflicts continue to persist in parts of the world — in particular on the African continent, with the crises in Côte d'Ivoire, Darfur and Somalia. The crises affecting the Middle East are a major source of concern. To that must be added new threats, beginning with terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The responsibility of the Council is to respond effectively and efficiently to each of those threats. The Council, and through it the United Nations, is increasingly being called upon. The deployment of more than 80,000 Blue Helmets throughout the world and the prospects of new operations — in the Sudan and Nepal, for instance — illustrate that point. How are we to meet those challenges?

First, we must work together, in unity. In the face of threats that go beyond borders, security will be achieved only through a collective effort. That entails two things. We must have a common view of the challenges to be overcome and of the solutions to be deployed. We must also continue to strengthen cooperation between the Council, the Secretary-General and regional organizations. Those joint efforts are prerequisites to our effectiveness.

In addition, the Council must be more able than it is today to prevent crises. That means that the United Nations must have an enhanced conflict-prevention capacity, that the Secretary-General must be able to alert the Council as quickly as possible as to possible risks of destabilization and that, lastly, we must be able to define comprehensive prevention strategies.

Furthermore, we must pay close attention to the management of the post-conflict period. The Peacebuilding Commission must of course play its role fully in that regard, as it has already begun to do with regard to Burundi and Sierra Leone. The Council must evaluate its efforts, consider as needed ways to increase effectiveness and take into account in its future efforts recommendations to be made by the Commission. Lastly, the Council must continue to consider, in close cooperation with the Secretary-General, ways to perfect the instruments at its disposal.

First, with regard to the maintenance of peace, the stakes are well known, namely, proper management of resources, more effective support for transitional processes, better coordination between protagonists, and special attention to the political process — which must necessarily be the basis for peacekeeping operations. That must be followed by the implementation of sanctions and other binding measures decided upon by the Council, in connection with which the Council has recently taken a number of important decisions. The Council must continue along that path in order to ensure the full implementation of such measures, as well as the effectiveness and transparency of its procedures.

Those are several avenues for action that we should pursue together. We must also not forget that peace and security also entail combating poverty, pandemics and corruption, as well as protecting human rights and fighting impunity. For justice is a precondition for peace. In that regard, the International Criminal Court will be an essential tool in the future.

The challenges we must overcome are daunting. Unfortunately, the work before us continues to be

enormous. Thus we must continue our joint efforts to further improve the effectiveness of our actions. That is incumbent upon us all, as is the responsibility to protect.

Mr. Al-Bader (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month, as well as for calling this meeting on an important item to debate the basic tasks of the Security Council. I also wish to thank you for your efforts to prepare the draft presidential statement and to preside over the negotiations on it.

We also wish to welcome Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, who is participating officially in a meeting of the Security Council for the first time as Secretary-General. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate him on his appointment. I wish him every success in discharging the tasks entrusted to him by the Charter and in contributing effectively, through his unique position, to international efforts designed to uproot the numerous evils that threaten international peace and security and the welfare of peoples. We are confident that his experience, wisdom and skill will lead to the attainment of the goals to which we aspire.

We are also pleased at the enthusiasm Mr. Ban has demonstrated in leading the international Organization. We shall be quite prepared, through our membership of the Security Council, to cooperate with him as regards the matters before the Council. Effective cooperation between the Council and the Secretary-General is a sine qua non for the success of our work. In the efforts to maintain international peace and security, there must be concerted action between the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, on the one hand, and between the Security Council and the other bodies of the United Nations, on the other hand.

Given that under the Charter of the United Nations, which established the Security Council, the Council's basic responsibility is to maintain international peace and security, it is fitting that the Council should comprehensively address threats to international peace and security. This is an opportunity to underscore the Council's efforts to deal with such threats. It is also an opportunity to examine new threats, for the changing world is subject to unpredictable threats. The Council accorded this issue the attention it deserves when it convened a high-level meeting in September 2005 to take up the matter at the level of heads of Government.

The concept of security has evolved over the years and become more comprehensive, broadening to include issues such as collective security and others that were overlooked by established concepts pertaining to armed conflict. Wars are not the only thing that threatens people's security. We should do our best to prevent conflict and to make peace. All United Nations bodies should work together to achieve that goal, and the Council should cooperate with other organs to achieve that objective. According to the Charter of the United Nations, the main task of the Security Council is the maintenance of international peace and security. That should be in line with the principles enshrined in the Charter regarding the maintenance and development of peaceful relations between States and the prevention of conflict. The Council has a great responsibility in that connection.

We cannot deny the complementary link between development and peace, on the one hand, and human rights, on the other. In fact, the United Nations cannot confine itself to the maintenance of international peace and security; it should also focus on socio-economic development and the protection of human rights. None of those goals can be achieved in isolation from the others. The establishment last year of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council illustrated the interest of the international community in that regard.

New challenges have emerged recently in the area of threats to international peace and security, including the threat of terrorism. The international community must stand against such scourges, including the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction, whose proliferation we must do our best to prevent. We come from a region that has been plagued by conflict for a long time. We look to the Security Council and the Secretary-General to achieve just and lasting peace and development in our region.

In conclusion, we once again wish every success to the Secretary-General and his aides, and reiterate our support for and cooperation with the Organization and him.

Mr. Mantovani (Italy): Let me first convey to you, Sir, our warmest congratulations on your assumption of the Council presidency, as well as my

warmest thanks to Qatar for presiding over the Council in December.

It is indeed a great privilege for me to take the floor as the representative of Italy at this first public debate of the Council in 2007 to address the core function of the Security Council. I wish therefore to thank you, Sir, at this first debate under your presidency, for convening this meeting. I also wish to take this opportunity to express my warmest welcome to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, to whom Italy wishes all the best in his future endeavours.

I will confine myself to making a few remarks on some relevant issues.

As to conflict prevention, the Security Council has an important responsibility to play in that field, together with all the other bodies of the United Nations, first and foremost the General Assembly, and with all other actors that operate on various levels to prevent the outbreak of new conflicts, be they States, international organizations, non-governmental organizations or civil society representatives. In that framework, we think that the Secretariat should enhance its essential role in presenting the Council with analyses of possible new crisis situations and we urge from it the greatest possible cooperation in that field.

With regard to peacekeeping, Italy believes that the Security Council's operative decisions should also give adequate consideration to the views of countries which, while not members of the Council, provide human, technical and financial resources to United Nations missions. Actually, our view is that there is a strong need for more regular interaction between the Security Council, the troop-contributing countries and the General Assembly bodies that have a voice in peacekeeping operations, as well as the Secretariat, whose crucial role is to ensure that the conduct of peacekeeping operations matches effectively the purposes for which they are established. Based on its renewed participation in United Nations-led missions, Italy will continue to work in close coordination with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in that respect.

Lastly, we believe that the United Nations essential role in peacekeeping should be enhanced through closer cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union, the European Union, the Organization of American States, the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Pacific Islands Forum and others, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. Being a strong believer in the values of the European Union, Italy will strive to ensure that the European political and military mechanisms interact ever more closely with the Secretariat, in compliance with the Joint Declaration on United Nations-European Union Cooperation in Crisis Management, adopted in September 2003.

On peacebuilding, the general membership and civil society have great expectations for the Peacebuilding Commission's role in stabilizing countries emerging from conflicts. In our view, it is crucial that not only the Commission, but also the entire United Nations system, focus their strategy to meet those expectations. A better definition of its core issues, a task-oriented agenda, a closer partnership with relevant countries, and the more active involvement of all stakeholders are, in our view, the guiding principles for that crucial subsidiary organ of the Security Council and the General Assembly. Italy expects the advice of an effective and authoritative Peacebuilding Commission to be duly taken into account by the Council, by the United Nations other main bodies, and by the international financial institutions to ensure a smooth transition from conflict situation to sustainable peace and development.

With respect to terrorism, in recent years the Security Council has adopted a series of measures to safeguard international security, which Italy strongly supports. Last September, the whole membership approved the first Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We believe that the action of the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies cannot be separated, in that field, from the action that other United Nations bodies perform in fulfilment of their respective mandates.

Italy intends to provide constructive inputs to the Security Council's action in its fight against international terrorism, working to ensure that this challenge be perceived as a common endeavour of the international community as a whole. We are confident that coordination among the various initiatives already under way in the fight against international terrorism shall be pursued effectively in the framework of the Global Strategy.

To conclude, Italy wishes to praise the Security Council's primary role and essential, irreplaceable action for the maintenance of international peace and security. As members know, we also strongly believe that effective, inclusive multilateralism is the best way to address the threats that are rising on the international horizon. That is why Italy seeks to further strengthen the action of the Security Council through a comprehensive reform that encompasses representativeness, transparency and efficiency, highlighting the real ownership of the decision-making process by all the Members of the United Nations family.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): At the outset, I would like to commend the Russian presidency for its initiative in organizing today's timely and highly relevant debate.

Let me also join previous speakers in welcoming Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for the first time to the Security Council this morning and thank him for his opening remarks. We very much appreciate the Secretary-General's commitment to working closely and intensively with the Security Council on all crucial issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security. I would like to assure him of Slovakia's full support for his work, his dedication to leading by example, and his eagerness to work hard in all three pillars of the United Nations portfolio — security, human rights and development.

We believe that the emergence of new threats to international peace and security requires the constant attention and regular adaptation of the Security Council and its working methods to the new security environment. That is particularly true for some of the most daunting challenges, such as the upsurge in terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and massive intra-State conflicts with the potential to destabilize entire regions, such as the crisis in Darfur. It is our joint responsibility to intensify our efforts to achieve tangible progress in our work, which should bring people more peace and security, better respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and greater prosperity. Words, statements and proclamations need to be transformed into practical measures, making a real difference on the ground. Otherwise, the entire United Nations system, including the Security Council, will lose its relevance and credibility.

We believe that the Security Council, in addition to its usual focus on peacekeeping operations, must equally concentrate on conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding, which are undoubtedly very complex and extremely challenging tasks, but crucially important ones.

As part of the Council's preventive diplomacy, in accordance with the 2005 World Summit Outcome DOCUMENT and Security Council resolution 1625 (2005), we believe that the Council needs to do more in such areas as the protection of civilians, including women and children, in military conflicts. We must do everything to prevent another Rwanda or Srebrenica from happening again. In that regard, we fully endorse the concept of responsibility to protect adopted by our heads of State and Government in September 2005. Furthermore, we hope to be able to rely on receiving more regular and more analytical reports from the Secretary-General on regions of potential armed conflict. The good offices of the Secretary-General will certainly continue to be an indispensable tool.

As regards post-conflict peacebuilding, it is crucial that the Council make better use of the potential and of the coordinating and advisory functions of the Peacebuilding Commission. The first results related to the situation in Burundi and Sierra Leone have been promising but fairly modest so far. Our joint efforts need to be intensified and widened. Smooth transitions from peacekeeping to the post-conflict phase ought to be addressed in a more comprehensive and more systematic way.

In this context, I would like to highlight the issue of security sector reform as one of the crucial challenges. The re-establishment of functioning security institutions often lies at the core of many peacebuilding efforts. Neglecting or insufficiently carrying out this reform has too often had in dire consequences, including countries relapsing into violence and armed conflict. That is why Slovakia, in cooperation with other partner countries, has recently launched an initiative that will result in an open Security Council debate next month on the issue of security sector reform.

Also among the Council's top priorities are the looming threats of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Slovakia firmly believes that the Council needs to intensify its efforts in these major areas and strive for more tangible results by

implementing existing resolutions, in particular resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001), 1540 (2004), 1718 (2006) and 1737 (2006). The Council must also seek to enhance and streamline the work of its relevant committees.

In addition to receiving and evaluating reports from States Members of the United Nations, more needs to be done, in particular, in providing guidance and technical assistance to States in capacity-building, local and regional ownership and strengthening United Nations partnerships and cooperation with regional, subregional and other intergovernmental organizations. Efforts of regional and other stakeholders and of the United Nations must reinforce and complement one another, thereby making the best use of existing capacities and often very limited resources.

My statement today would be incomplete without mentioning the ongoing need for comprehensive reform of the Security Council, to which Slovakia is firmly committed. Such reform must include both an increase in the Council's membership and an improvement in its working methods.

Slovakia welcomes and is committed to fully implementing the outcomes of the intensive work conducted last year by its revitalized Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. As a current non-permanent Council member, Slovakia will spare no effort to help achieve further progress in the work of the Informal Working Group.

Mandate review was another essential element of the World Summit's reform agenda, one that could help make the entire Organization, including this Council, more relevant, efficient and effective in its work.

In conclusion, allow me once again to reiterate my delegation's full commitment to the Security Council's intensive and close cooperation with the Secretary-General and with the entire United Nations Secretariat.

Finally, we would like to thank the Russian delegation for preparing the draft Presidential Statement, the adoption of which we support today.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): May I start by congratulating the Russian Federation and you personally, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Council. I would add my thanks to Qatar for its stewardship of the Council in December. I would also like to welcome the five new Council members and pay tribute to the outstanding contributions of the five members whom they have replaced.

I also want, in particular, to welcome the new Secretary-General and assure him publicly of my Government's unstinting support for his efforts throughout his tenure.

Mr. President, it is timely that you have brought the Council together with the new Secretary-General to look ahead to the challenges and opportunities that we face. This Council has always been at the forefront of global efforts to maintain international peace and security, its essential responsibility. But the international landscape, with the consequent requirement for Council activity, has rarely seemed as complex as it does today.

In the past year the Council played a crucial role in helping end the fighting between Israel and Lebanon. It worked continuously to try to bring peace to Darfur, and is still doing so. It responded firmly to the actions of Iran and North Korea. It continued to support African Union efforts to bring an end to the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. It supported the first free elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 40 years.

The year ahead promises to be no less challenging. We must ensure that international efforts intensify to bring an end to suffering for the people of Darfur. We must continue to tackle the threats of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The international community needs a comprehensive Middle East strategy. We must redouble our efforts to support those who want to achieve peace rather than to perpetuate turmoil in that region. At the core of that strategy will be the question of Israel and Palestine. This meeting is an opportunity to reflect on how the Council, in partnership with the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, as well as with other United Nations organs, regional bodies and international actors, can improve its capacity to meet those challenges.

I want to focus now, particularly, on the conflict cycle. The maintenance of international peace and security demands, above all, more effective action to prevent conflicts from occurring and then recurring and, where they do exist, to help bring them to an end on a sustainable basis.

So the challenges for us are how to be better at conflict prevention and resolution and at crisis management, including peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding. In each of these areas, the Secretariat can, I believe, help continue to improve our collective efforts. It is important and welcome that these issues are covered concisely but cogently, and with proposals for action, in the presidential statement that we will adopt later today.

On conflict prevention, this Council adopted a landmark resolution at its summit meeting in 2005. Security Council resolution 1625 (2005) set out an ambitious vision for a more comprehensive, integrated and proactive approach to prevention. It called for more regular and analytical reporting from the Secretariat and asked the Secretary-General to help countries at risk of conflict to perform strategic conflict risk assessments. It also stressed the importance of effective conflict prevention strategies, embracing not just traditional security and political factors, but also economic, social and humanitarian factors, as well as the field of governance and human rights. The resolution constituted, in fact, a very comprehensive policy.

Too often, the Council and the international community are witnesses to the emergence of conflict, rather than actively being involved in prevention. We see — or we fail to see — a crisis developing, and agree to act only when it is too late. The Council and the Secretariat must form a stronger partnership in conflict prevention, through ambitious implementation of resolution 1625 (2005), to ensure that we do better collectively at the early stages in anticipating and thus preventing conflict.

A second priority is peacekeeping. United Nations peacekeeping is ever more in demand. The surge in missions and numbers over recent years is striking. It is therefore incumbent on us to ensure the most effective use of scarce resources. An important part of this endeavour is to ensure that peacekeeping missions have clearer, more focused mandates with specific objectives to be achieved within given timeframes.

Peacekeeping missions should form part of a wider peacebuilding strategy to achieve the progress necessary so that such missions are no longer needed. In many post-conflict situations, the risk is that peacekeeping missions become part of the landscape and allow a status quo to persist. We therefore need to focus on a coherent approach with the goal of resolving the underlying issues.

To do this, the Council should be more strategic in assessing the underlying issues and in giving missions more purposive mandates. This approach requires from the Secretariat reporting which makes clear proposals on how United Nations missions can and should evolve and what action the countries concerned, the international community and the Council itself can take to accelerate transition from peacekeeping to self-sustaining peace.

Finally, on a closely related point, we need to strengthen our collective ability to pursue post-conflict peacebuilding. Establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission was an important achievement, but it will fulfil its objectives only if it becomes an action-oriented, strategic body in which countries emerging from conflict can discuss candidly and effectively with international, regional and local actors in post-conflict peacebuilding what needs to be done and who should do it.

The United Kingdom considers, therefore, that the Peacebuilding Commission needs to build on its initial activities to ensure that it can make a real difference. Its role in advising the Council is also centrally important. Our continuing involvement in Sierra Leone, Burundi and other countries that will be on the Council's agenda in future must take full account of the contributions and proposals that the Peacebuilding Commission makes.

In conclusion, the Security Council plays a central role in the international community's efforts to maintain peace and security. But we cannot work in isolation, given the interdependent nature of security, development and human rights. The new Secretary-General and the Council must and will, I am sure, work in partnership with each other and with other international actors to maximize our collective ability to tackle threats, to seek opportunities and to promote the cause of peace.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): Mr. President, may I first congratulate you and the other members of the delegation of the Russian Federation on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and also commend you for having organized this debate on contemporary threats to international peace and security. Also, permit me once

again to congratulate the new Secretary-General on his assumption of his high office and to express my delegation's appreciation for his presence here with us for the first time in the Council and for his statement. We wish him success in his new assignment.

Globalization has thrust upon the global community new and multifarious threats to international peace and security of a scope and intensity that could never have been anticipated by the founding fathers of the United Nations. In the process of trying to eliminate the traditional threats, the international community has been confronted with new, and, in some cases, more dangerous ones, which threaten our common well-being and survival.

Understandably, our immediate priority must be to deal with ongoing conflicts and imminent threats such as terrorism and all forms of extremism. We must also remain focused on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, small arms and light weapons, as well as gross abuses of human rights, including ethnic cleansing and genocide. Equally critical are the problems of global warming and the weaponization of outer space, which are serious potential threats and must be kept on our radar. Nor must we lose sight of the widening gap between the rich and poor, both within and among nations, which is bound to have a destabilizing effect on international peace and security.

In short, threats to international peace and security cannot be dealt with piecemeal through a patchwork of initiatives that merely address the symptoms without really touching on the root causes. The realities of today require that the Council pursue its mandate within a comprehensive conceptual framework of peace and security. It is through such an approach that the Security Council can provide leadership that is inspiring, effective and credible in the process of tackling the problems that threaten to compromise the survival of humankind.

Development must be an important component of our collective security system. Combating poverty and improving education and health care will save millions of lives as well as strengthen the capacity of States to combat terrorism, organized crime and prevent other threats. If development is deemed so crucial to security, then more determined and focused efforts should be made to monitor the implementation of internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We encourage the appropriate United Nations organs, departments and agencies to redouble their efforts in helping Member States to achieve those goals.

It has long been recognized that in dealing with conflicts, more emphasis should be placed on conflict prevention. We acknowledge the substantive progress that has been made through United Nations peacekeeping operations, especially in Africa, and in laying a foundation to deal effectively with conflicts. To consolidate peace throughout Africa and in conflict-ravaged countries in other areas, it is imperative to emphasize that a coordinated, coherent and integrated approach must be taken to post-conflict peacebuilding, with a view to achieving sustainable development. We believe that this is precisely what the Peacebuilding Commission is supposed to help us achieve.

Unquestionably, global terrorism is one of the foremost threats to international peace and security today. Terrorism, a constantly mutating phenomenon, represents an assault on the fundamental principles of law, human rights, and the peaceful settlement of disputes, on the basis of which the United Nations was founded. In accepting that terrorism cannot be justified, irrespective of the reasons behind it, we must be careful not to ignore grievances such as political oppression and alienation, which breed terrorism. For the international community to defeat terrorism and the threat it poses, we must act with unflinching determination to resolve the political disputes and long-festering conflicts which generate support for terrorism.

We recognize that the Security Council has played a commendable role in this field through its landmark resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001), 1540 (2004) and 1624 (2005). However, much more remains to be done in providing technical assistance to help Member States comply with those resolutions and implement the strategy that has recently been adopted by the General Assembly. Moreover, we are so close to, yet so far from, completing the cycle by concluding a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

Transnational organized crime also has the potential to heighten the risks posed by all the other threats. Terrorists, for instance, use organized criminal groups to move money, men and materials around the globe. Governments and rebels sell natural resources through organized criminal groups to finance wars. In the process, the capacity of States to establish the rule

of law is weakened. Combating organized crime therefore becomes essential in fighting hideous trans-border crimes such as trafficking in human beings.

Preventing the spread and use of weapons of mass destruction by States and, more importantly, by non-State actors is imperative to ensure a more secure world. The challenge lies in taking effective measures to reduce the demand for such weapons and curb the supply of materials as well as the technology for their production. We therefore regret the failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to adopt any agreement. Despite recent controversy related to the issue of nuclear proliferation, the NPT still enjoys near-universal membership, and we remain convinced of its viability and integrity as a sure way of containing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

A related issue is the threat that the proliferation of small arms poses to international peace and security. With a reported circulation of about 40 million worldwide, small arms have become the real weapons of mass destruction in many countries, especially — paradoxically — in Africa, where such weapons are not manufactured. We welcome the Council's efforts in encouraging Member States to fully support the recommendations contained in the Programme of Action adopted at the July 2001 United Nations Conference.

We are also encouraged by the adoption by the General Assembly in 2005 of an international instrument to identify and trace illicit small arms. However, our commitment to dealing with the threats posed by such weapons has been seriously undermined by the failure of the 2006 United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action. Our confidence has also been shaken by the failure of the Council, despite the strenuous efforts made by some of its present members and States that were members in the immediate past, to agree on a draft resolution on this issue last year.

On balance, it is evident that the Security Council has played a commendable role in dealing with both imminent and potential threats to international peace and security. But it should be noted that, despite the Council's important role in the maintenance of international peace and security, it is only one of the many organs and the wide array of international bodies and entities dealing with some aspects of the threats that have been identified. It is of cardinal importance, therefore, that, in discharging its obligations under the Charter, the Council endeavour to foster a genuine partnership with some of those entities, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union and the European Union, which have so far proved active in this field.

It behoves the Council also to look for more creative ways of actively engaging and involving in its work the wider membership of the United Nations, the non-members, which are expected to comply with its binding resolutions and decisions, including the generic legislation of the Council. Such an approach, we believe, will bring more effectiveness and success to the Council's work.

Lastly, we believe that the time has come to expand the membership of the Council.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this, the first month of the new year, and to assure you that you can rely on our full and effective cooperation. I would also like to pay tribute to Mr. Ban Ki-moon, our new Secretary-General. We would like to assure him that we have every confidence in him and to wish him every success as he carries out his important new responsibilities.

As we all know, over the past decade the concept of security has been expanded from one with a narrow political and military definition to one with new dimensions, each of which corresponds to new threats and challenges — terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, grave human rights violations, organized crime, the situation of fragile States and environmental degradation. If we are to counter these threats, we need an effective multilateral system founded on solid international institutions and respect for international law. For Belgium, the United Nations, with the Security Council at its heart, plays a crucial role in this respect.

In the context of this new concept of security it is essential that, above and beyond pre-established and often reductionist approaches, we recognize that, at the end of the day, it is the security of men, women and children that is at stake. That is why Belgium welcomes the increased attention that the Security Council is giving to the protection of civilians — particularly that of women, children and other

vulnerable groups — in armed conflict. The relevant resolutions aimed at the protection of civilians must be effectively implemented.

In this regard, Belgium would also like to emphasize the importance of ensuring the close monitoring and rigorous implementation of arms embargoes in conflict areas. Indeed, we all know that it is first and foremost civilians who are the victims of lack of compliance with such embargoes and, in particular, of the abuse of small arms and light weapons.

In this context, I would like to refer to the principle of the responsibility to protect, which was enshrined during the 2005 Summit and which has since been taken up in numerous resolutions. Belgium is fully aware that the operationalization of that principle will require in-depth and prudent reflection. We nonetheless believe that that principle will henceforth be part of the conceptual *acquis* of the work of the Security Council.

As we all know, terrorism represents one of the greatest threats to international peace and security. The Security Council plays a leading role in international action to combat terrorism. In this regard, Belgium welcomed the adoption by the Council of resolution 1624 (2005). By reaffirming the importance of respect for international law, including human rights law, as well as the importance of dialogue and understanding among civilizations, it aims to prevent incitement to terrorism. That is a good example of the preventive dimension of Security Council action. In this regard, the Council could also consider how best to counteract hate speech and discourse inciting violence during periods of armed conflict, as well as before conflict breaks out or with a view to preventing the re-emergence of conflict. As we know, words can be as deadly as weapons.

Conflict prevention remains the main — albeit, by definition, the less visible — task of the Security Council as the guardian of international peace and security. Conflict management, by contrast, is its most visible task. Peacekeeping operations are the Council's instrument of choice in shouldering its responsibility in the area of international peace and security. Such operations cover a broad range of activities, from classic peacekeeping to multidimensional operations, culminating in transitional administrative missions.

The range of diverse actions undertaken by the Security Council in recent years testifies to the growing support for a more operational and more pragmatic approach to carrying out its functions. Belgium welcomes that development. At the same time, however, my country urges caution regarding the risk of the indiscriminate proliferation of such operations. Indeed, it is quite clear that not all crisis situations can be resolved in that manner. The Security Council must therefore study each case on the basis of specific criteria in order to decide whether or not such an approach can be used. In this context, we should remember that before any peacekeeping force can be deployed, there must be a peace to be managed — or, at least, a credible political process under way.

The establishment of the Peacekeeping Commission by the Council completes that conceptual evolution of the work of the Security Council from preventive diplomacy to crisis management to peacebuilding — the only guarantee for the durability and irreversibility of any solution. Belgium believes that, now that the early work of the Commission has proved to be productive, the Security Council must henceforth consider useful interaction between those two organs — an interaction that Belgium hopes will be flexible, effective, pragmatic and free from procedural hindrances.

The presence among us today of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, also provides Belgium — which is well aware of the distinct functions and responsibilities of the office of the Secretary-General and of the Council — with an opportunity to state how much it appreciates the daily dialogue and cooperation between those two Charter organs, whose conceptual interplay has in recent decades stimulated and enriched the debates in the Council.

Mr. Ikoube (Congo) (*spoke in French*): I should like, first of all, to thank the delegation of Qatar for the manner in which it led our work last month. I would also like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of January. You can count on the full cooperation of my delegation during your tenure.

I should like to express my sentiments of friendship to those countries that left the Council at the end of last year — countries with whom we had excellent relations — and to welcome the new

members; they can rest assured of the full cooperation of the Congolese delegation.

I should also like to welcome the Secretary-General, who is participating in our work for the first time, and to extend to him our wishes for every success as he carries out his lofty and sensitive mission.

My delegation welcomes the fact that the Council is beginning 2007 by holding this public debate on a subject that is intrinsically linked to its major mission in an international context characterized by many grave crises. We are therefore grateful to you, Mr. President, for having chosen this item for discussion in the Council.

Some of the events of 2006 remind us that there are threats to international peace and security on various continents. They range from acts of everyday terrorism to the very real risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as protracted or potential conflicts. Those threats thus represent a daily reality for the international community as a whole and a constant danger for certain populations that live in fear and under threat. Let us therefore take full stock of those threats and ensure that we always make the most appropriate responses to them, which the Council never fails to do.

The best way to deal with threats to international peace and security is, first of all, prevention. We are pleased to note that the culture of prevention is beginning to take root within the United Nations and in certain States. In that regard, significant progress has already been made at the normative level with the adoption of Security Council resolution 1318 (2000) and, particularly, resolution 1625 (2005), on strengthening the effectiveness of the Security Council's role in conflict prevention, particularly in Africa. Here, we should also commend the General Assembly for its recent adoption of a Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, to whose implementation all States should commit themselves.

In the Outcome document of the 2005 World Summit (General Assembly resolution 60/1), Member States renewed their commitment to promoting a culture of preventing armed conflicts and strengthening the means of prevention available to the Organization. In addition, many strategies have already been indicated in our previous work on this issue. It is important to ensure regular follow-up.

We also note that, as the Secretary-General stated in his report on the prevention of armed conflict (A/60/891), the surest way to prevent crises is to reduce the impact of risk factors. While the primary responsibility for prevention falls to Governments, they sometimes find it impossible, for various reasons, to live up to their obligations. Hence, there is sometimes a need to rely on external support — for example, in the context of the adoption and implementation of measures aimed at regulating the trade in certain resources that fuel conflicts, such as diamonds and timber.

Among settlement mechanisms, we would stress political dialogue among the parties to a conflict and the good offices of the Secretary-General. That practice has been developing recently, and we encourage it. We always encourage the search for peaceful solutions, and we will assist the Secretary-General in his mediation efforts. In that context, the new mediation support capacity within the Secretariat is an initiative that we welcome and support.

Unfortunately, when prevention is not enough, we must face up to a sad necessity: conflict management, through existing mechanisms or those yet to be established. That includes the strengthening of peacekeeping capacities — which, it must be stressed, lack the resources necessary to carry out their missions — and partnerships within the system and with regional and subregional organizations.

In that connection, we welcome the positive developments in the relations between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, as evidenced by the recent declaration on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union defining the framework for a 10-year programme to strengthen African Union capacities, signed on 16 November 2006 at Addis Ababa by the United Nations Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. But as everyone knows, the will and the commitment of the African continent are not always enough to meet logistical or management needs in certain situations as complex as that of Darfur, for example. Hence the need for such a partnership, which is vital for maintaining peace and security on the continent.

The year 2006 also reminded us that the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is not a mere possibility, but rather a reality that can be

effectively addressed only through compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which establishes obligations, but also rights, for all signatories. Indeed, it is essential to implement that important instrument in full — that is, by taking into account its three pillars: non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the right of every State to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Weapons of mass destruction are and will always be a threat to humanity as a whole, regardless of who possesses them. In the fight against the threat posed by such weapons, the unity of the Council is essential, as are its objectivity and impartiality. Otherwise, its action risks being misunderstood and suspected of being illegitimate.

Once again, we wish to welcome the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, which has just taken its first, tentative steps. We hope that that organ will effectively strengthen the system for stabilizing situations and will help to improve, in a lasting manner, the atmosphere in areas emerging from conflict. We also wish to emphasize the need to take account of the development and human rights aspects in any conflict prevention policy, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. We must emphasize that for some peoples, extreme poverty, hunger, disease and small arms and light weapons represent real weapons of mass destruction and thus pose threats to international peace and security.

Mr. Wolff (United States of America): Let me join others in congratulating you, Sir, and your delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January. We very much look forward to working closely with you. We also welcome the new members of the Council, with whom we look forward to a productive, cooperative relationship over the next two years. I would also like to thank Qatar for its presidency last month and to thank those members whose terms on the Council ended in December.

In addition, I would like to join others, on behalf of my entire delegation, in welcoming Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to the Council for the first time in his new capacity. The Secretary-General will always be welcome here, and we look forward to working closely with him and his colleagues in the Secretariat as the Council attempts to address the most serious challenges facing the international community in the twenty-first century.

I should like to compliment the Secretary-General on his fast start in his first days in office. Among his many early actions, we particularly note and welcome the selection of Foreign Minister Asha-Rose Migiro of Tanzania as Deputy Secretary-General. Tanzania served effectively on this body over the past two years, and it was a privilege to work closely with its Government and its fine delegation during that period. We look forward to working with Mrs. Migiro and with all the other members of the Secretary-General's team in the time ahead.

You have brought us together today, Mr. President, to talk about the principal mission of the Security Council under the United Nations Charter: its responsibility to maintain international peace and security. Unfortunately, as the work of the Council in recent years has demonstrated, the range of challenges facing the international community grows only more complex and more challenging.

The Council must act not only to manage conflict, but also to prevent it. The disturbing reality is that a significant amount of the Council's time is spent dealing with conflict within States, rather than conflict between them. Not only does the Council need to act to protect civilian populations that are the target of their own Governments, but experience has demonstrated many times over that in today's world, events occurring in one country affect the world beyond its boundaries. Internal conflicts create unstable borders, increase regional tensions and create significant economic and social burdens. Our continued and urgent focus on the situation in Darfur is just one such example.

The international community has long recognized, rightly, that a general breakdown of governance and political order, terrorism, cross-border activities by armed groups, widespread and systematic human rights violations and outflows of migrants and refugees represent a threat to international peace and security. The Council needs to be ready to identify and address those kinds of threats before they break out into open conflict or create unacceptable human or material costs.

We must also strive, together with the Secretariat, to ensure that traditional peacekeeping operations

continue to benefit from more sophisticated approaches to assessment and planning. At a time of growing demand for peacekeeping, the Council needs to properly exercise its responsibilities, working with other bodies of the United Nations, to ensure sufficient oversight and effective management of peacekeeping operations.

In that regard, we are very troubled by the recent reports of sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel participating in some United Nations missions, and we urge the Secretariat to take appropriate action to ensure that those reports are fully investigated and that those responsible for any such abuses are held accountable.

It is also critical that the Council help countries emerging from crisis to make the transition to a more stable, long-term path of economic and political development.

We welcome the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission. However, we will measure the success of the Commission on the ground — in Burundi, Sierra Leone and other countries in which it will engage — in terms of visible results promoting sustained peace, stability, reconstruction and development.

Finally, we know with unfortunate certainty that the Council will continue to be seized with the issues of combating terrorism and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Only last week, Al-Qaida issued an explicit threat against the United Nations and its peacekeepers overseas. We know that terrorists still work to kill innocent civilians around the world. This body has a responsibility to meet those threats with unity of purpose and clear resolve.

We must also continue to work to prevent the spread of the world's most dangerous weapons and the means of delivering them. That applies not only to terrorists that seek them but also to States that pose a threat to international peace and security.

In facing those challenges and the others on our agenda, the Council must be prepared to act quickly to respond to emerging threats or developing crises. But we must act in a way that improves the situation on the ground in affected areas. Our efforts must focus on improving the ability of parties to a conflict to come to a solution, and not to make that solution more difficult or simply score political points for one side or the other.

We will continue to work closely with the other members of the Council and the Secretary-General to ensure that the actions of the Council result in tangible progress on the ground in addressing the most pressing challenges the world faces today. We welcome ideas from the Secretary-General about how we might strengthen the exchange of information between the Secretariat and the Council. In conducting our business and generating the mandates that guide the Secretariat's work on our behalf, we still have work to do to make this body as effective as it should be. We need, as one example, to find better ways to anticipate crises and act to prevent the outbreak of, or relapse into, conflict.

Again, Mr. Secretary-General, I join others in welcoming you today. I hope you will be a frequent participant in the Council.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): At the outset, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. I also wish to thank you for your warm words of welcome to my delegation as a member of the Council. I would also like to join others is expressing gratitude to the delegation of Qatar for its commendable stewardship of the Council during its presidency last month.

My delegation would also like to welcome Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the new Secretary-General, with whom we look forward to working closely in enhancing the role of the United Nations in the promotion of peace. We wish to reaffirm our full support and cooperation to him.

As we journey into a new year, we are carrying with us both contentment and dissatisfaction. We take comfort in witnessing the cessation of some conflicts and the transformation of conflict-affected countries into ones that are steadily rebuilding and reconstructing. The role and contribution of the United Nations and the international community in that graduation are exceptional, and the Security Council has been determined and decisive in that regard.

The experience in all those conflicts reaffirms the critical importance of peacekeeping operations in the fulfilment of the Council's primary responsibility in saving humankind from the scourge of war. We believe that the continuing importance of peacekeeping missions should be duly recognized. We also see a need

to continue to ensure strict observance of the fundamental principles of peacekeeping.

Peacekeeping alone, however, is not sufficient if our goal is to achieve sustainable peace. In my delegation's view, post-conflict peacebuilding is vital in helping war-torn societies make the transition to durable peace. In that regard, the role of the Peacebuilding Commission is of paramount importance. We look forward to its further constructive contribution to peace consolidation efforts.

The end of conflict in certain countries in Africa and other regions does not close the chapter on the book of war on that continent. On the contrary, we have witnessed the emergence of new complexities in current conflicts. For example, the presence of cross-border flows of combatants and civilians has impeded existing peace efforts and exacerbated humanitarian conditions in those regions.

In addressing conflicts, my delegation reaffirms the need for respect for the principles of the sovereign equality, national sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States, as well as the principles pertaining to refraining from the threat or use of force. The principles of the peaceful settlement of disputes, inclusive dialogue, constructive collaboration and preventive diplomacy should be kept as a priority in addressing threats to international peace and security. Therefore, in the view of my delegation, sanctions should be used as a last resort — with a clear, transparent and measurable timetable — and should provide an escape route to allow for reinstating peaceful settlement procedures.

In the Middle East, peace remains far from a reality. The situation there will remain grim and protracted if the Israel-Palestine conflict is not resolved in a just and peaceful way. My delegation holds the view that the Israel-Palestine conflict is at the core of all problems in the region, and therefore believes that the Council should give high priority to resolving the conflict. Settling the Israel-Palestine conflict in a way acceptable to all parties will have a profound impact on the prospects for peace in the region.

Reports of the recent decision of the Israeli Government to approve the building of a new settlement in the occupied West Bank, which is in contradiction to its commitment under the Road Map, and the continuing incursions and raids by the Israeli Defense Force into several West Bank cities and towns in the last few days are of deep concern to my delegation. We think that those manoeuvres are indeed against the spirit of the agreement between the Israeli Prime Minister and the President of the Palestinian Authority. The Security Council should respond to that development, as is consistent with its mandate and responsibility.

As a victim of terrorist attacks, and bearing in mind the enduring presence of the terrorist threat, my delegation is convinced that the Council should remain vigilant and act in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Our cause and practice in combating terrorism should be based on respect for human rights and human dignity. Indonesia holds the view that the problem of terrorism is best addressed through a holistic approach.

My delegation also sees the urgent need for a dialogue to address the proliferation of nuclear weapons in Asia. Although the threat of nuclear weapons has subsided in other regions, a new nuclear theatre may be developing throughout West and East Asia. It is therefore important that we find a diplomatic solution to the nuclear issues of North Korea and Iran. We also attach great significance to the speedy establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, a region characterized by instability and tension.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as the cornerstone of disarmament, should be strengthened. There should be a balanced undertaking among the three pillars of the Treaty. We believe that, in the end, the absolute guarantee for eliminating the fear caused by the possible use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is the total elimination of those weapons.

Democracy is a universal value, and history proves that it serves as a pivotal foundation for the creation of peaceful societies based on human dignity. In the United Nations forum, we are of the view that there are organs warranted primarily to address democracy and other related issues, including human rights. Their work is notable.

Considering the level of complexity and the magnitude of the challenges that humankind is dealing with in the present day, partnership is the key word that guides us in responding to those challenges. My delegation concurs with Secretary-General Ban

Ki-moon on the significance of collective wisdom and collective efforts. We cannot go it alone. The Council cannot stand on its own in fulfilling its responsibility. Conceptually, peace may require a master architect, but in execution it needs the labour of many. While it is obvious that the Council has the primary responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security, we need to recognize the contribution of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to enhancing the role of the United Nations in the promotion of peace.

In the spirit of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, robust partnership with regional organizations should be strengthened. In spite of known limitations, the value of those evolving partnerships is clearly demonstrated in various regions where the Security Council has enlisted the support of regional organizations to help resolve some disputes.

In order to address future challenges, the Security Council reform process should be sustained. Aspects of the Council's membership, as well as its working methods, are in need of substantive revision. Both are equally important. We view the comprehensive reform of the Security Council as an integral feature of the overall reform process of the United Nations.

In conclusion, we support the draft presidential statement prepared by your delegation, Sir, and look forward to its adoption. I also wish to reiterate the commitment of my delegation to the successful work of the Council under your presidency.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Let me congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month.

We also welcome Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to his first meeting with the Security Council. We wish him well and we are among the delegations that are very delighted that he has chosen Ms. Migiro of Tanzania as his Deputy. He has claimed one small victory for gender balance in this Organization very early in his term, and we thank him for that.

Despite the theme of today's debate, the reality is that we come today to discuss the mandate of this Council, which according to the Charter is that of maintaining international peace and security. More than 60 years ago, when the founders of the United Nations bestowed that responsibility upon the Security Council, the world faced different kinds of threats, mostly emanating from inter-State conflicts. Today we are challenged by complex, multifaceted and interconnected threats that go beyond the mandate of this Council. For example, there is the fundamental threat of poverty and underdevelopment that is at the root of most conflicts that find their way to the agenda of this Council. In fact, evidence has shown that even threats posed by terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction have a common thread linking them to poverty and underdevelopment. Yet, the mere existence of nuclear weapons is itself a threat to international peace and security.

There is little doubt that poverty alleviation is the most effective tool for conflict prevention. Of course, the dilemma we face in this Council is that the issues of poverty and underdevelopment should not and must not be left to an organ, such as ours, of such a limited membership. The General Assembly, which enjoys universal membership, remains the central multilateral forum for addressing the pressing global issues and challenges presently confronting all States. The responsibility for managing and achieving worldwide economic development and social progress, as well as for responding to threats to international peace and security, must be shared among all States and exercised multilaterally through the United Nations.

All principal organs of the United Nations, including subsidiary bodies such as the Human Rights Council, have a role to play in developing and implementing a more effective collective security system. A common approach to collective security is legitimate only if it is in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The active participation of each and every principal organ of the United Nations is crucial in the exercise of its respective functions and powers, without upsetting the balance established by the Charter. A range of other multilateral institutions, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations Development Programme, and including the United Nations Development Fund for Women, also have an important role to play in addressing the threats we currently face.

The challenge for the United Nations is to use its resources in a balanced manner that addresses development, security and the protection of human rights. Therefore, the Security Council as presently constituted is limited in how to deal with the threats of the twenty-first century. While we welcome the effort

by the Council aimed at enhancing the approach to addressing the threats we face, we would prefer to do so within the mandate given to us. In carrying out its primary responsibilities, the Security Council should not encroach on the jurisdiction and responsibility of other principal organs of the United Nations.

The United Nations Charter has placed a significant responsibility on the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. Needless to say, that responsibility gives the Council a far-reaching impact on the lives of many people in the world.

In recent years, the Security Council has been too quick to threaten or authorize enforcement action in some cases, while being silent and inactive in others. For example, the Palestinian-Israeli issue is a legitimate agenda item for this Council. However, it has become quite noticeable how this Council has failed to act even in the face of the most shocking contraventions of international law.

Instead, the Council has increasingly resorted to taking up issues that do not fall within its mandate. Often, the Council has resorted to Chapter VII of the Charter as an umbrella for addressing issues that may not necessarily pose a threat to international peace and security, when it could have opted for alternative provisions of the Charter to respond more appropriately, utilizing other provisions of the same Charter. Chapter VII should be invoked, but as a last resort.

My delegation wishes to reiterate our long-standing position on the importance of a closer and effective cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. We are particularly encouraged by the institutional relationship between the African Union and the United Nations with regard to collective efforts aimed at resolving African conflicts. Similarly, we express our appreciation for all efforts to promote sustainable peace, development and stability on our beloved African continent.

In the matter of United Nations peacekeeping, respect for the basic principles of peacekeeping — such as the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence and in the defence of a mandate authorized by the Council — is essential to its success. My delegation recognizes the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in addressing the special needs of countries emerging from conflict and its assistance in the areas of recovery, reintegration and reconstruction. We look forward to an inclusive debate on strengthening the role of this important body.

Finally, let me once again reiterate South Africa's desire to cooperate with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his team. Also, my delegation stands ready to work with other members of this Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. We thank the Russian presidency for having given us an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment in a presidential statement, which we fully support.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, first of all, to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January. We would also like to thank the delegation of Qatar for the work accomplished. I would like to commend you, Mr. President, and the delegation of the Russian Federation for giving us this opportunity to formally welcome the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to whom we wish success in his undertaking and to whom we offer support. At the same time, we welcome this opportunity to address an issue of utmost transcendence, namely, current threats to international peace and security and how best to confront them.

Panama is a country where people of many ethnicities, cultures and religion live in peace and harmony. It is a country that historically has maintained friendly relations with States of different political and ideological orientations. It is a country that by its Constitution is demilitarized, a country that adheres to the doctrine of human security as part of its national laws and a country with a canal that is neutral in accordance with an international treaty and by its own wishes. That is why no one should be surprised that this subject attracts our special attention.

More than sixty years ago, when our predecessors entrusted the United Nations Organization with the responsibility for and the obligation of maintaining peace and security, they did so with the conviction that by doing so they were contributing to saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

However, since then, the world has changed dramatically, and the main threats no longer stem from wars between States. Today, these threats derive principally from destabilization caused by poverty,

injustice and marginalization. They come from the spread of infectious diseases, from the scarcity and abuse of natural resources, and from destruction of the environment. They stem from ethnic, cultural and religious conflicts, and from the systematic violations of human rights. They stem from transnational organized crime, from the stockpiling and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and from the illicit trafficking in small arms. Finally, they derive from fundamentalism, especially those forms that proclaim themselves the guardians of the truth and that seek to impose this truth through force, including through terrorist acts.

Necessary and timely attention to these great threats will require us above all to fully know, understand and address the root causes. While it is true that a large share of this responsibility falls to the United Nations, other international organizations, States themselves, nongovernmental organizations and — why not say so — all human beings, out of a common moral sense, must do likewise.

Within the United Nations, the Security Council bears the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. However, not all potential threats can or should be examined immediately by the Council. There are other principal and subsidiary organs within the United Nations that can and should also contribute to addressing these threats, including the Secretariat, with its vast capacity for preventative diplomacy, the General Assembly, which enjoys universal representation, the Economic and Social Council and the Human Rights Council. Each, according to their powers and functions, can contribute to addressing many of these issues.

In this respect, we should recall that the Charter not only grants the General Assembly the right to discuss any question relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, but also, to a certain extent, imposes the responsibility upon the Assembly to call the attention of the Security Council to those situations that are likely to endanger peace and security. It is no exaggeration to say that the Assembly has much to do in this respect.

With regard to the Security Council, there is no doubt that the spirit and reason for its establishment lie in the need to have one organ that can effectively and efficiently contribute to the resolution of critical situations before they develop into conflicts of greater complexity.

The Charter, however, imposes on the Security Council the obligation to exhaust all mechanisms it offers and all options of prevention and mediation that are contemplated in Chapter VI, and also demands that the Council cooperate broadly with regional organizations referred to in Chapter VIII, before considering sanctions or the use of force provided for in Chapter VII.

To address threats to international peace and security, humanity has placed its hopes in the United Nations. In the light of this trust, all United Nations decisions — but in particular — those taken by the Security Council, given their binding nature — must be adopted in strictest conformity with international law. The credibility and legitimacy of its actions and, accordingly, its ability to address current threats to international peace and security will largely depend upon that.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Mr. President, the Chinese delegation would like to welcome Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who is attending a formal meeting of the Council today for the first time in his capacity as Secretary-General of the United Nations, and we thank him for his brief statement made just now.

Over sixty years ago, the founders of the United Nations entrusted the Security Council with the solemn responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. Since then, both the United Nations and the Security Council have gone through unusual times and experienced major tests. In particular, after 11 September 2001, there has been a profound change in the challenges to international peace and security, with traditional security threats continuing unabated and non-traditional security threats becoming ever more acute.

In the face of this grave situation, the Security Council has not budged or tried to evade its responsibilities. On the contrary, it has worked hard to change with the times. Its tasks have gradually evolved from the deployment of peacekeeping forces to peacebuilding and reconstruction, and from merely alleviating symptoms to addressing root causes. The Council has also taken a series of actions in response to new threats such as terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

In September 2005, leaders of the 15 countries members of the Council gathered here, at the head of State level, to engage in important discussions on how to respond to threats to international peace and security — discussions which resulted in the unanimous adoption of resolutions 1624 (2005) and 1625 (2005).

Changes in the international situation have prompted progress in the work of the Council and expanded the scope of its Council's agenda. The Security Council, as the core of our collective security system, has been confronted in this new century by an ever-changing international situation and numerous grave challenges. The common task of the 15 members of the Security Council and of the United Nations family as a whole is to enhance the Council's capabilities and effectiveness so that it can better address the issue of hotbeds of tension worldwide.

In the view of the Chinese delegation, the first priority is for multilateralism to be upheld and enhanced and the authority of the Security Council preserved. On major issues relating to peace and security, the Council should base its judgment on the practical aspects of the situation and take collective action in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Secondly, the Council should adopt a long-term strategic perspective; devote greater attention to the comprehensive management of conflicts so as to address both their symptoms and root causes; and formulate and gradually enhance a comprehensive strategy covering aspects ranging from conflict prevention to the restoration of peace, and from peacekeeping to post-conflict reconstruction.

Thirdly, the Council should enhance its coordination with the General Assembly and pay heed to the views and concerns of non-Council members, especially those of affected States. It should also strengthen communication and cooperation with the relevant regional organizations, further improve its own working methods and enhance its efficiency.

As the chief administrative officer of the United Nations, the Secretary-General has a unique role to play in mediating issues relating to national and regional hotbeds of tension. It is undeniable that the Security Council, in addressing the items on its heavy agenda, has benefited from the support provided by the diligent work of successive Secretaries-General and their teams. The Chinese Government deeply appreciates the work done by Mr. Kofi Annan, the former Secretary-General, over the past decade. We have every reason to expect an even more outstanding performance from Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Mr. Ban, coming from Asia and known for his diligence, perseverance, moderation and knack for constructive compromise — which are characteristic of Asians — will surely give full play to the unique role of Secretary-General in the maintenance of peace and the promotion of development.

Together with other members of the Security Council, China will, as always, continue to support the work of the Secretary-General, enhance its cooperation with him and work actively for the maintenance of international peace and security. I am convinced that the future of the United Nations and the Security Council will be a bright one.

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to congratulate the Russian delegation and you in particular, Ambassador Churkin, on Russia's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and to assure you of our delegation's full support in the discharge of your important functions.

Likewise, we congratulate the outgoing President, Ambassador Al-Nasser of Qatar, for his skilled stewardship of the Council in December 2006. We also warmly welcome the five new Security Council members.

We wish to welcome the presence at this meeting of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, to whom we wish every success in his work, which he is just beginning. We assure him of Peru's full confidence in him and of its cooperation in the discharge of his sensitive mandate.

As was recognized in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, we are working on the common understanding that development, peace and security, and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. We must therefore coordinate our actions in order to address threats to international peace and security and their interconnection in a comprehensive and far-reaching manner as well as prevent them, as set out in resolution 1625 (2005).

Globalization has had a major impact on the potential for economic inclusion and for knowledge-sharing, but we know that there is also a dark side

to this phenomenon which has aggravated marginalization, thus providing fertile ground for the emergence of fresh threats to international stability. New risk factors have arisen. We know that many of the items on the Security Council's agenda relate to intra-State conflicts, which, for the most part, occur in States with scant progress, fragile institutions and worrisome development indicators.

To prevent these types of conflicts from multiplying and countries from sliding back into such situations, it is necessary to address not only the military and institutional recovery aspects, which the Security Council has made a priority, but also pay close attention to other factors such as poverty, social exclusion, environmental degradation and trans-national crime, as well as focusing more intently on the issue of cultural diversity.

Unresolved inter-State conflicts also deserve particular attention. The indefinite prolongation of such conflicts gravely endangers the achievement of the Council's main objectives, and renewed efforts to bring about peace must therefore be made, in the framework of international law and commitments based on mutual respect.

The threat of the recurrence of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity has sharpened our resolve to recognize that we have a responsibility to protect peoples from such scourges. Thus States Members of the United Nations, including Council members, must be vigilant in order to fulfil our mandate to protect peoples when the State concerned is unable to do so or unwilling to comply with its obligations.

It is equally urgent that we strengthen disarmament and non-proliferation regimes for nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and related systems. Peru supports the Security Council's efforts to prevent the proliferation of such weapons in the hands of State and non-State actors, and also deems it necessary for the multilateral system to redouble its efforts to that end and make further progress in the collective commitments undertaken. We must work towards a system of security based on cooperation that will strengthen peace and security structures and prevent arms races at the global, regional and subregional levels.

Terrorism has become a universal scourge that must be defeated. It is unacceptable in any shape or form, regardless of motivation. It must therefore must be condemned and combated in all its aspects. In this struggle, the multilateral system has at its disposal 13 international conventions in additional to regional agreements and the more recent Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. In that context, resolute action on the part of the Security Council is vital to combat this threat. The commitment of each and every State must also be unwavering. We must act to ensure that States have adequate operational capacity, above all in the areas of intelligence and police cooperation, as these are key tools in this struggle.

However, we should not restrict ourselves to this aspect of our work. The activities of irregular armed groups, the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, the smuggling of natural resources, drug trafficking and other ways in which organized crime weakens institutions undermine social stability and democracy and pose a threat to security. We must continue to pay priority attention to all of these factors, which converge in a number of existing conflicts.

Peru also believes it essential for us to acknowledge the special importance of the role of the environment in maintaining international peace and security. Water, forests and the climate are elements for which we must formulate specific strategies and action plans if we are to prevent the further destruction of natural resources. Deforestation, pollution, abrupt climate change and radiation, among other phenomena, all have a negative impact on the ability of many peoples to subsist and on the quality of life on our planet now and in the future.

The diversity of threats to peace and security and their interrelated nature require the assistance of multilateral agencies and regional organizations, as well as the active participation of the private sector and civil society to respond to such threats, each within the context of its purview.

Finally, I would like to reaffirm Peru's commitment — drawing on its own economic and social experience and its regional involvement and profound multilateral vocation — to continue to contribute constructively to international peace and security and to economic and social development, and to support and protect democracy, freedom and human rights throughout the world.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

This meeting of the Security Council is timely in every respect, first and foremost because the focus of our attention is the genuine strengthening of the major responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. This meeting is of special significance, because Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the Secretary-General, is participating in the Council's activities for the first time. I would like, on behalf of the Russian delegation, to welcome him once again.

In September 2005, during the World Summit, heads of State or Government of the countries members of the Council conducted an exchange of views on the issue under discussion today. There can be no doubt that the world has not become any more stable or predictable since that meeting. The international community continues to face wide-ranging challenges in the interrelated areas of security, humanitarian problems and development. We are still confronting severe challenges resulting from the escalation of armed conflict, international terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including the danger of their falling into the hands of terrorists and extremists.

The time that has gone by since the Security Council summit has not, however, been wasted. The major result is the growing awareness of the fact that there can be no alternative to the consolidation of the central role of the Security Council and the United Nations in the quest for collective solutions to the many global and regional threats and challenges on the Security Council's agenda over the past year — we need think only of the war in Lebanon, of the problems relating to the observance of the nuclear non-proliferation regime or of the situation in Darfur.

It is significant that, on these and other pressing problems, members of the Council have been able to achieve agreement, sometimes after difficult negotiations, and to adopt effective solutions in the interests of long-term stability.

We hear criticism — sometimes not without reason — of the Security Council and of the entire United Nations for lack of effectiveness in its decisions and actions. This should not lead us to be pessimistic. Indeed, it is only now — when the world has rid itself of the confrontation of the cold war and is painfully disabusing itself of any illusions of the effectiveness of unilateral approaches — that the United Nations and the Security Council, for the first time, have an opportunity fully to realize their potential. Working in cooperation with all interested partners, Russia will continue to promote the enhancement of the practical implementation of Security Council efforts to prevent and resolve disputes and armed conflicts, including in Africa.

Special attention must be given to the building up of United Nations potential in the area of peacekeeping. The effort to maintain peace under the authority of the Security Council and in accordance with its decisions remains the hallmark of this world Organization. That has been made clear in the sharp increase in demand for such operations. Today, more than 80,000 military personnel and police contingents are involved in a total of 19 operations. Russian peacekeepers are participating in operations in the Middle East, Haiti, Kosovo, Serbia, Africa, Asia and, with the political support of the United Nations, on the territory of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

We are continuing to enhance our contribution to the peacekeeping and humanitarian activities of the United Nations. Not all of the unique peacekeeping opportunities and mechanisms of the United Nations are being fully used. That situation could be improved through the more active utilization of the potential of the Military Staff Committee, as well as of the opportunities provided by regional organizations, on the basis of the relevant provisions of the Charter and with respect for the prerogatives of the Security Council.

We base ourselves on the need to strengthen, through joint efforts, the international legal basis of peacekeeping in accordance with the Charter and the decisions of the Security Council, which will serve to reaffirm multilateral approaches in the area of crisis resolution. The task of enhancing the coordination and effectiveness of our fellow countries emerging from crisis has been entrusted to the Peacebuilding Commission. That body has already taken its first steps in peacebuilding, helping in Burundi and Sierra Leone. We attach great importance to the commencement of the effective activities of that intergovernmental body, in particular through the strengthening of its relationship with the Security Council and the General Assembly, pursuant to the decisions of those organs. We intend to actively support the accomplishment of that task.

Combating international terrorism remains one of the key areas in creating an effective system of collective security. The United Nations has a central role to play in that area. The problem of combating terrorism and its sources, and issues relating to the development of broad anti-terrorism cooperation, should in future be the subject of constant attention on the part of the Security Council and the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

We also need more vigorous measures to prevent deadly weapons from falling into the hands of non-State entities. A priority in this area is the consistent implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

In broader terms, it is necessary to continue work to ensure the smooth coordination of all of the activities of all of the Security Council's anti-terrorist committees, keeping in mind their cross-cutting mandates. The goal is to enhance the usefulness of the activities of all of those structures, while avoiding duplication of effort. The Security Council faces a major challenge in this regard. It is important to make rational use of existing resources, focusing the activities of the Council on those areas relating to threats to international and regional peace and security and observing the division of authority between the major bodies of the world Organization set forth in the Charter.

I would like to focus on another important aspect. We base ourselves on the premise that enhancing the effectiveness of United Nations activities in the key areas of strengthening peace and security will be promoted by reforming the management of the Organization and enhancing transparency and accountability in the Secretariat. We wish the Secretary-General every success in modernizing the United Nations, in accordance with international standards and in keeping with the demands of our time.

In conclusion, I would like to express gratitude to all of our partners in the Security Council for their constructive participation in and agreement on the presidential statement to be adopted later today. We trust that it will serve to further strengthen the potential of Council to carry out its overall mission.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: I thank you, Mr. President, and the members of the Council, for the kind words addressed to me and for this opportunity to meet with all of you today. I assure you of my wholehearted support and dedication in ensuring the efficient and successful work of the Council.

Before I begin, I would like to pay tribute to the former Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his significant contributions to the work of the Organization over the past 10 years.

I listened carefully to members of the Council in their interventions on this important subject, which is, after all, their primary responsibility under the Charter. I also observed that the members of the Council are united and speak with one voice on the need to view conflict management in a holistic manner: prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. There is also unity among Council members with regard to the need to address conflict in a comprehensive manner, with development and human rights issues being accorded their proper priority.

As your important statement just now made clear, Mr. President, the United Nations has an exceptionally challenging agenda ahead of it in 2007. We face an unprecedented demand for peacekeeping, as well as a range of growing demands for preventive diplomacy, good offices, peacebuilding and efforts in conflict management. The Council, and the Organization as a whole, are going through one of the busiest periods in our history, with a record number of peace operations, resolutions and reports over the past few years.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has expanded to cover 18 missions, with a historic high of 100,000 personnel in the field, and climbing. The total number of peace operations in which the United Nations is engaged in some form has risen to around 30. This globalized presence requires ever closer cooperation between the Security Council and the Secretariat — including, of course, the Secretary-General.

Some of our most acute and persistent challenges are in Africa. One of my top priorities will be to step up efforts to address the crisis in Darfur, where the humanitarian situation is growing worse, despite all the declarations and proclamations of the international

community over the past three years. In the coming days, weeks and months, I will coordinate closely with leaders in Africa and beyond, and I will work through my Special Envoy for Darfur to secure the constructive engagement of the Sudan, African Governments and the international community as a whole.

At the same time, we must stay the course in other parts of the continent. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we must ensure that recent positive developments enabled by our largest peacekeeping operation are consolidated so that lasting peace and stability take hold in the heart of Africa. I look forward to discussing these and other issues with leaders at the African Union summit to be held in Addis Ababa at the end of this month.

Equally, I will strive to inject new momentum into our search for peace and stability in the Middle East. This means rededicating ourselves to the work of the Quartet in resolving differences between Israel and Palestine — differences which carry such a unique symbolic and emotional charge for people far beyond the physical boundaries of the conflict. It means supporting Lebanon in everything from its physical reconstruction to its quest — as yet incomplete — for a peaceful, democratic and fully independent future. And, in the wider reaches of the region, it means continuing our efforts to address the political and security challenges of Afghanistan and Iraq.

By the same token, we must keep working for a conclusion to the uncertainty that still hangs over the status of Kosovo, which if unresolved threatens to cast a shadow over regional stability in South-Eastern Europe.

So I am glad to join you today for this discussion on a range of issues that no country can resolve on its own — issues which present threats to the security of people around the world and to the entire international community. Responding to such threats is, after all, one of the primary purposes of the United Nations and a particular responsibility of the Security Council.

As the President of the Council pointed out, recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the threats that we face in this century are multifaceted and interconnected. This is true whether we are considering the threat of terrorism, a faceless enemy that knows no boundaries, or weapons of mass destruction, which present a unique existential threat to all of humanity. Both demand urgent, sustained and comprehensive attention from the international community.

The same is true of HIV/AIDS and the other pandemics, which not only take a huge human, social and economic toll on countries that can least afford it, but also pose threats to peace and stability in the devastation that they wreak on capacity and governance.

The same is true of extreme poverty, which breeds a hopelessness that allows for neither mercy nor dignity and which is preyed upon by zealots and extremists to further their agendas and ambitions. Achieving our goals for development around the world is essential to build lasting peace and security.

The same is true of egregious human rights violations, weakened governance and failure to uphold the rule of law in various parts of the world. Over the past years, the United Nations has sought to strengthen the three pillars of this institution - those of security, development and human rights, all underpinned by the rule of law – in order to build a more peaceful, more prosperous and more just world for succeeding generations.

We have important achievements to build upon, from the Peacebuilding Commission to the Human Rights Council and the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, as well as the responsibility to protect. But we must also do more to invigorate disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. This will require strengthening the disarmament and non-proliferation regimes themselves, as well as addressing the special challenges posed by the cases of Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Security Council has acted by adopting important resolutions on these issues, but a great deal remains to be done. It is essential that the international community work as one to address these challenges. I am committed to strengthening and consolidating the work of the United Nations in this direction. In such an endeavour, I shall try to play the role of harmonizer and bridge-builder and work to restore trust between Member States and the Secretariat.

The Council has acted on the reform agenda in areas ranging from the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission to strengthening working methods, while also acting on counter-terrorism and sanctions. I will make it my priority to strengthen the

ability of the United Nations to play its role to the fullest extent in conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. I see all of those as a continuum and the role of the United Nations as one that must be coordinated, comprehensive and consistent.

To that end, we need to look at the organizational structures of all departments and offices related to peace and security and find ways to strengthen our capacities. To meet the growing demands of globalized operations, we must identify ways and means to build a staff which is truly mobile, multifunctional and accountable and which lives up to the highest ethical and professional standards.

The draft presidential statement before the Council calls for a strategic approach to the assessment of conflict situations and the planning and management of peacekeeping operations. It will provide an important guideline for me in building such improved capacities and enhancing the delivery of our common objectives. That will be a top priority for me in the coming weeks.

Again, let me say how very much I look forward to working with the Council in the years ahead.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council.

> "The Security Council welcomes the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon. The Council commits itself to work closely and in a focused and action-oriented manner with him in order to better address the multifaceted and interconnected challenges and threats confronting our world within its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, as provided for by the Charter of the United Nations.
>
> "The Security Council pledges to uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirms its commitment to the principles of sovereign equality, national sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States, underlines further the need for respect for human rights and the rule of law, including protection of civilians in armed conflict, and the importance of adhering to the principles of refraining, in international relations, from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations, and of peaceful settlement of international disputes.
>
> "The Security Council, recalling that the 2005 World Summit Outcome recognized that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, emphasizes that the challenges and threats confronting the international community demand a resolute and coherent response, based on the collective security system of the Charter of the United Nations. The Council reaffirms its commitment to address the whole range of threats to international peace and security, including armed conflict, terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
>
> "The Security Council recognizes the essential role of the United Nations in the global effort to combat terrorism, which in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to peace and security. The Council therefore welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It stands ready to play its part in its implementation. The Council, in keeping with its responsibility in the international community's efforts to combat the scourge of terrorism, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, underlines its determination to intensify its efforts, including in translating the commitments made at the Security Council summit meeting in the course of the 2005 World Summit meeting into practical results. It reiterates further that States must ensure that any measures taken to combat terrorism comply with all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, refugee law and humanitarian law.
>
> "The Security Council reaffirms its resolve to take appropriate and effective actions against any threat to international peace and security caused by the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery, in conformity with its primary

responsibilities, as provided for in the United Nations Charter.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of more effective international efforts to prevent conflict, including intra-State conflicts, and encourages the Secretary-General, as already requested in Security Council 1625 (2005), to provide the Council with more regular, analytical reporting on regions of potential armed conflict, and stresses the importance of establishing comprehensive strategies on conflict prevention in order to avoid the high human and material costs of armed conflict.

"The Security Council underlines the need for improved United Nations capacity to assess conflict situations and for the effective planning and management of United Nations peacekeeping operations and for quick and effective responses to any Security Council mandate. The Council also recognizes the importance of a more strategic approach to the oversight and direction of peacekeeping to maximize the prospects for successful transition in the countries concerned, and so as to make possible the most effective use of scarce peacekeeping resources. To this end, the Council requests the Secretary-General, in managing and reporting on peacekeeping missions to focus on the steps needed to achieve the objectives of the mission, both by the host Government and by the international community, and to propose to the Council, as appropriate, initiatives to accelerate the transition process.

"The Security Council emphasizes the importance of post-conflict peacebuilding to assist countries emerging from conflict in laying the foundation for sustainable peace and development and, in this context, welcomes the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission that should play an important role to achieve the objective of improving United Nations capacity to coordinate with regional organizations, countries in the relevant regions, donors, troop contributors and recipient countries and to perform peacebuilding activities, in particular from the start of peacekeeping operations through stabilization, reconstruction and development. It appreciates the progress made thus far in the initial work of the Commission on Burundi and Sierra Leone. The Council underlines the importance of close interaction between the two bodies and will regularly address the work of the Commission in its own discussions and will take into account the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission.

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to working in partnership with the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, other United Nations organs, regional, subregional and other intergovernmental organizations, with non-Council members, including those Member States that are parties to a conflict, and with troop-contributing countries, financial and other stakeholders in pursuit of the common objective of maintenance of international peace and security."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2007/1.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5616

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5616th meeting

Tuesday, 9 January 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Ikouebe
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Bader
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

07-20483 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of Germany in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) and Mr. Matussek (Germany) took seats at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Javier Solana to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

On behalf of the members of the Security Council, I should like to welcome the participation in today's meeting of Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union, and to wish him every success in his important work during 2007.

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains a focus of attention for the Security Council. The country's first democratic elections in 40 years have resulted in the election of a President and the formation of a representative National Assembly.

A new chapter is beginning in the history of the country. On the agenda now are local elections, which should take place by the end of 2007. All of these positive changes are the result of coordinated efforts on the part of the international community, first and foremost by the United Nations and its Security Council, the African Union, the European Union and other regional organizations.

An important contribution to the success of the Congolese peace process was also made by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Working jointly with the European Union, which was authorized by Security Council resolution 1671 (2006) to deploy a force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUC has assisted the Government in its efforts to ensure safety and security and the rule of law in the country.

At this meeting, we will hear briefings by Mr. Javier Solana, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Mr. Ibrahim Gambari.

Prior to those briefings, I shall first invite the representative of Germany to take the floor.

Mr. Matussek (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate

countries Turkey and Croatia align themselves with this statement.

I would like to thank you for giving the European Union the opportunity to report on the implementation of the mandate of the European Union-led peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (EUFOR). I will make some introductory remarks and then ask you, Sir, to give the floor to the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union (EU), Mr. Javier Solana.

A year ago, in late December 2005, the United Nations requested the European Union to provide additional security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo while the country went through the election process. The EU — after close consultation with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo — agreed to support the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to assist in ensuring security in the interest of a successful transition. In April 2006, the Security Council adopted resolution 1671 (2006), which authorized the European force. In July, EUFOR was launched as an autonomous EU-led operation within the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy, with a total of 21 member States participating. As envisaged in resolution 1671 (2006), EUFOR was concluded after four months, at the end of November.

Following operation Artemis in Bunia in summer 2003, the operation was another milestone of cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations in the field of peacekeeping in Africa. The EU and the United Nations — both at the level of headquarters and of the missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — worked together intensively before and during the operation. Our joint efforts helped to provide stability, defuse tensions and deter potential spoilers during critical stages of the election process. The lessons drawn from that experience will be important for our future partnership in the field of crisis management, which is growing ever more intensive. That increasing cooperation must be accompanied by appropriate mechanisms of dialogue and exchange — issues we should look into in the coming months.

The European Union warmly welcomes the success of the first democratic elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in more than 40 years and congratulates the Congolese people on that major step towards stabilization and reconstruction in a spirit of national reconciliation. The European Union calls on all political players to engage constructively in the post-transition process.

The European Union recalls the substantial efforts it has undertaken in support of the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the political level, as well as through instruments of the European Security and Defence Policy, the EU Electoral Observation Mission and the assistance provided through the European Development Fund and, bilaterally, by EU member States.

The EU remains fully committed to continuing its support for the consolidation of stability and reconstruction, notably through assuming a coordinating role for international efforts in the security sector, in close cooperation with the United Nations, to support the Congolese authorities in that field. It is essential that future cooperation be based on the new authorities' strong commitment to good governance and to strengthening the rule of law. Appropriate flexible mechanisms will need to be developed with the new Congolese Government to ensure effective coordination of support and political dialogue.

In concluding, let me thank the people, the Government and the political actors of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for their confidence in the European force, which demonstrated its neutrality and effectiveness throughout its mandate. The EU is also grateful to the Government of Gabon, which allowed the European force to use Gabon as an important base for the operation. We appreciated the excellent cooperation with the United Nations, both in New York and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and with the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We hope that the successful elections will be the first step towards a brighter future for the Congolese people and the entire region of the Great Lakes.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to Mr. Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union.

Mr. Solana: It is for me a pleasure to have been invited to participate in this important meeting about the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

As has been said already, the request of the United Nations almost a year ago for military support

came at a crucial point in time. The transition period in the Democratic Republic of the Congo had entered its final phase, and it was essential to create the necessary conditions and security environment to ensure a successful outcome. The European Union had worked very hard for a number of years to facilitate the democratic transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Elections were the final success. We could not fail, and we responded positively to the United Nations request to put soldiers on the ground.

We deployed a military force with operational headquarters provided by Germany, a European Union presence in Kinshasa, and a force element in Gabon, ready to be deployed as necessary. I would like to draw attention to that structure. By keeping an over-the-horizon force in Gabon, we ensured simultaneously a deterrent capacity and avoided an unnecessary heavy military presence in Kinshasa. In fact, the deterrence effect of the European Union-led peacekeeping force (EUFOR) was a significant factor in limiting the number of incidents. Reinforcement by additional force elements from the over-the-horizon component in Gabon was undertaken on a number of occasions. In addition, a number of deployment operations to the geographically agreed points of application were undertaken. That served also to increase the geographic spread of the force's deterrent effect.

The incident with the greatest destabilizing potential occurred on 21 August 2006 with an attack on Vice-President Bemba's residence. EUFOR intervention, in close cooperation with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), was decisive in containing the potential spread of violence at a particularly sensitive moment in the election process. In addition to that, EUFOR confirmed its position of neutrality in the eyes of the Congolese population and reinforced its credibility.

We can state today that the mission has been a success, both in the way it has been conducted and in its contribution to the overall positive conclusion of the transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Although a lessons-learned review is under way, some key elements for its success can already be identified: the definition of a clear mandate, both in scope and in time frame; highly professional troops, to whom I wish to pay tribute; a very high degree of interaction with MONUC, which I believe to have been fundamental; and an active communication policy, both towards the Congolese population and to key actors in the electoral process. In a wider context, transparency and information-sharing with African partners, the African Union and other African regional organizations invited to deploy liaison officers also facilitated the process.

(*spoke in French*)

Military intervention makes real sense only if it is part of a comprehensive commitment. That is particularly true for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the European Union deployed the full range of its political, civilian, military, financial and development resources in a consistent approach and in close cooperation with all regional and international stakeholders. In that regard, the relationship that has been built with the United Nations reflects the joint statement issued by the two organizations on 24 September 2003. I can today confirm that it is along those lines that the European Union is determined to continue to work with the United Nations.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo can now look forward to its future with greater confidence. Credit for that goes to the international community, but especially to the Congolese themselves, who have chosen the path of reconciliation. In that connection, I should like to pay tribute to the Congolese people, those they have elected, the Independent Electoral Commission and national and international observers. Working together, they have made it possible to properly carry out the first democratic elections in the country in more than 40 years.

However, we must still face significant challenges. The inaugural address made by President Kabila included the key principles on the basis of which the European Union is prepared to continue its commitment. Those include good governance, democracy, the rule of law, an opening to the opposition and, in particular, priority to security and security sector reform. With regard to security, the European Union has already launched military and police missions. We are currently considering ways to strengthen those missions.

Allow me, in closing, to say that we believe that MONUC and Special Representative Bill Swing have made decisive efforts on the ground in recent years and months. Those efforts will continue to be equally decisive in the future, both in assisting the new institutions and in further strengthening stability in the east of the country. Like the United Nations, the European Union will remain committed to that goal.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Solana for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

Mr. Guéhenno (*spoke in French*): I am grateful for this opportunity to reiterate once again the United Nations appreciation to the European Union and the 21 member States, including Turkey, who have participated in the European Union-led peacekeeping force (EUFOR). I should also like to thank the High Representative, whose personal commitment has greatly contributed to the success of the operation. In extending its support to the Congolese people, EUFOR contributed to establishing an environment of stability in which to carry out the elections held in July and October 2006, in accordance with resolution 1671 (2006) of 25 April 2006.

For the United Nations, that has been a very positive experience. The presence of EUFOR was quite valuable during the critical period of the elections, at which time the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the United Nations Development Programme joined their efforts with other international actors and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Independent Electoral Commission to organize and carry out this complex undertaking, which was the largest electoral exercise that the United Nations has ever supported since the inception of the Organization.

EUFOR complemented MONUC's massive effort by adding its extra capacity and flexibility and by helping to address security challenges and any potential escalation that could have arisen from developments in the country. That cooperation was particularly effective following the violent incidents in Kinshasa last August. EUFOR's presence was also an important element in the deterrent role played by United Nations military and police forces on the ground, which in turn supported the Congolese national police. In that connection, more than 40,000 Congolese police were trained by MONUC to help create a secure environment for the electoral process.

While acknowledging the outstanding effort of the European Union, we should also like to note with appreciation the generous assistance of Germany, which provided the operational headquarters for EUFOR in Potsdam. We should also like to take this opportunity to note the sizable number of troops deployed to EUFOR by the Governments of Germany and France. The excellent cooperation that developed between EUFOR and MONUC and between the United Nations Secretariat and the general secretariat of the Council of the European Union serves as an example for future cooperative efforts. I should also emphasize that that cooperation included operational military aspects as well as the logistical support provided by MONUC to EUFOR in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The deployment of EUFOR in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was a further demonstration of the European Union's ongoing strong support for the United Nations throughout the Congolese peace process, especially during difficult moments. In that connection, we all recall Operation Artemis. The joint implementation of resolution 1671 (2006) produced many positive lessons, including the importance of early coordination at the technical level and of mutual understanding of each organization's concepts and procedures. We have already started drawing such lessons together, and we will continue to work together to determine how we can build on that experience in planning other operations in the future.

The United Nations Secretariat is determined to fully exploit the strategic and operational potential of partnerships with various multilateral organizations, including in the very important area of security sector reform. In that regard, we welcome the support of the European Union mission to provide advice and assistance for security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (EUSEC) and the European Union Police Mission in Kinshasa (EUPOL), which continue to make very important contributions in the areas of security sector and police reform.

(*spoke in English*)

It is difficult to overemphasize the significance of the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to which the United Nations and the European Union, together with many other Member States, have contributed. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many individual member States of the Council, and in particular South Africa, for their outstanding support to that vital endeavour. Only a few years ago, few observers believed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo would be able to rise to the challenge of ending the conflict and holding its first democratic elections since 1960.

The credit for those elections goes to the Congolese people, who conducted themselves throughout with patience, courage, great dignity and determination. Their desire for change has been the main driving force of the electoral process. Credit is also due to the Independent Electoral Commission, which operated in a war-torn country with little or no infrastructure, poor communications and limited transportation. Despite criticism, pressure and occasional threats from different quarters, the Electoral Commission carried out in full its historic mission. All international partners should take great pride in having supported the Congolese people and its institutions in successfully passing this milestone.

MONUC has been the largest and most expensive United Nations peacekeeping operations in the world, with thousands of troops and over 100 aircraft. Five peace accords involving African countries, more than 35 Security Council resolutions, African Union and Southern African Development Community involvement, $500 million in international electoral funding and strong support from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, have all contributed to the success of the peace process. The European Union in particular has played a crucial role at several critical electoral junctures over the last several years.

The events of the last few months have produced a new positive dynamic in the country. On the 30 December, President Kabila appointed Mr. Antoine Gizenga, former presidential candidate in the first round of the elections, as Prime Minister. Mr. Gizenga is currently consulting on the formation of a Government, which is expected to be completed this month. At the end of December, the National Assembly elected Mr. Vital Kamerhe as President of the National Assembly, along with six other members of the National Assembly bureau. All seven are members of President Kabila's Alliance for the Presidential Majority.

In the meantime, fighting between the Forces Armées de la Republic Democratic du Congo (FARDC) and the renegade forces of Laurent Nkunda in North Kivu has subsided over the last few days, and discussions, with the assistance of the United Nations, are being held between representatives of both sides. While the situation is still volatile, the Government of Rwanda reported that it was facilitating discussions between representatives of the FARDC and the Nkunda group in Kigali.

On 4 January, an agreement was reached in principle to form mixed FARDC brigades by merging the Nkunda forces with other soldiers presently deployed in North Kivu. MONUC continues to encourage the Government to find a peaceful and comprehensive solution that will address the causes of this still-simmering conflict in the eastern part of the country, and in that connection has facilitated the establishment of working groups to implement the agreements reached, with a view to resolving the underlying issues.

In Ituri, a new ceasefire between the FARDC and the National Integrationist Front, led by Peter Karim, was agreed upon on 2 January after fighting had broken out near the town of Fataki at the end of December. The situation remains very tense, with the United Nations conducting robust operations in support of Government troops.

We welcome the progress achieved at the summit meeting of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, which took place on 14 and 15 December in Nairobi, and we look forward to the implementation of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, which will no doubt assist in further stabilizing the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi.

MONUC stands ready to support the newly elected Government as it begins to address the many challenges facing the country, including completing the transitional agenda and implementing the provisions of the new constitution, particularly in regard to strengthening national unity, fostering the democratic process and embarking on a comprehensive governance reform agenda. The Government will continue to be assisted in rebuilding a State free from corruption that ensures the rule of law and good governance, protects human rights and civil liberties, encourages participation and pluralism, conducts major security sector reform and is committed to reducing poverty.

The continued engagement of the international community is also required to help the Democratic Republic of the Congo complete a comprehensive electoral process, with local elections due in the second half of this year. We are looking forward to close cooperation with the European Union and other parties on all these fronts.

The achievements of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will be at risk if the international community, or the Congolese people, repeat some of

our past mistakes. Early disengagement following elections elsewhere resulted in the resumption of conflict a few years later, requiring a new, costlier international intervention.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is the natural, yet still developing, pole of stability in the troubled region of Central Africa. The resolution of the crisis in that country will benefit Africa more than solving any other of the continent's current conflicts. Moreover, if Africa's worst conflict can be overcome, then other conflicts can be overcome as well. We are confident that our partnership with the European Union and other stakeholders will serve this strategic goal.

We are grateful for the Security Council's steadfast support for a settlement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has been demonstrated, among other things, by the Council's numerous visits to the country. We trust that the Security Council will remain actively involved in reinforcing and consolidating the input of the many bilateral and multilateral actors.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Guéhenno for his statement.

I would now like to give the floor to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

Mr. Gambari: I wish to join my colleague, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, in commending the European Union and other partners for their support in the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I wish also to commend Mr. Solana in particular for his leadership role in this regard.

The successful holding of elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo towards the end of 2006 is now a matter of historical record. Although elections are never an end in themselves, they are, when credible, a critical part of any democratic process. Holding successful and credible elections as the international community did in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, led by the United Nations, is a testimony to what can be achieved when there is a collective effort.

The Department of Political Affairs (DPA) is charged by the General Assembly with coordinating and supporting all United Nations electoral activity. DPA, through its Electoral Assistance Division, has been involved with the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since 2003, when it conducted the initial needs assessment which preceded the establishment of the Electoral Division of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). DPA has continued to provide ongoing advice and support to our colleagues in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and MONUC in the largest electoral assistance mission ever conducted by this Organization.

The role of the United Nations electoral team, which includes the Projet d'appui au processus electoral en République Démocratique du Congo (APEC), a programme supported by the United Nations Development Programme, has been to support the Independent Electoral Commission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, at the IEC headquarters, as well as in field offices nationwide.

On 18 and 19 December 2005, the Independent Electoral Commission, with the support of MONUC, organized the constitutional referendum, in which the Congolese voted overwhelmingly to adopt the constitution, which was subsequently promulgated on 18 February 2006. The voter registration exercise conducted between June and December 2005 resulted in the establishment of voters lists containing the names of 25.5 million eligible voters. Once again, I wish to join my colleague, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, in congratulating the Commission, and especially its Chairman, the indefatigable Abbe Malu Malu, on these monumental achievements.

The first round of presidential and national assembly elections were held on 30 July 2006. DPA also conducted several field missions in the country in 2006 to assist the MONUC Electoral Division with the operational planning for the 30 July and 29 October elections. From its roster of electoral experts, DPA continues to provide clearance for electoral staff and consultants.

In my own capacity as United Nations Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Activities, I visited the country in early October, along with Mr. Craig Jenness, Director of my Electoral Assistance Division. I met with the major stakeholders, including the two candidates, to encourage an environment of calm, tolerance and national reconciliation during and after the electoral process. In light of the disturbances following the first round of results, I specifically stressed the need for positive and constructive campaigning, conducted in accordance with the

electoral code of conduct. I also urged acceptance of the results by all parties and avoidance of a winner-takes-all attitude by the successful candidates.

The presidential run-off and the provincial assembly elections were subsequently held, as we know, on 29 October. The conduct of these elections by the Electoral Commission, including the transparency of the count and tabulation process, was generally praised by international observers, the media, and several world leaders. Observers noted that, in spite of the enormous logistical challenges involved, these elections reflected the outcomes of lessons learned from the first round of elections — that is, more efficient collection of results from the 50,000 polling stations in 12,000 locations, greater transparency in the electoral operations and improved training of the 250,000 polling workers. As a matter of fact, during my visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo last October, I observed firsthand in Mbandaka, in Equateur province, several training sessions for some of those polling officials.

The elections have resulted in the establishment of the first democratically elected national institutions in more than four decades. Of that, we can all be justly proud — most especially, the Congolese themselves. However, much still needs to be done. The Global and All-Inclusive Agreement of 2002 called for free and transparent elections to be held at all levels, including local elections. Therefore, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is now in a post-transitional period. But this is by no means a post-electoral period, because indirect elections by the provincial assemblies for senators, governors and vice-governors are expected to take place by the end of this month.

Local elections for municipal and rural councils are expected in the latter part of 2007. As a matter of fact, there are several legislative prerequisites for that to take place. The organic law establishing the post-transition national Independent Electoral Commission, mandated under the constitution to organize and conduct elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, still needs to be adopted. Similarly, the law on decentralization, which would define the new provinces in accordance with the constitution, as well as the local constituencies for administrative and electoral purposes, must be adopted.

Following the adoption of those legislative instruments, the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs will continue to assist MONUC's Electoral Division in providing capacity-building and support to the new election commission — particularly in finalizing the modalities for the local elections — as well as a voter registration update and operational preparations for and conduct of the 6,000 polls of the local elections. That effort could take anywhere from 13 to 18 months, depending on the modalities chosen. The actual elections will probably not begin before September 2007.

The establishment of local structures and institutions that have been freely chosen by their constituents is, in our view, essential for the legitimate extension of State authority, improved governance and the building of durable peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which will have consequences for the region. As has been stated, the Great Lakes region is an area in which we are following very closely developments in the areas of governance, development and security.

Permit me to express our gratitude to our colleagues in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and MONUC and to our European Union partners. It was only by pooling our resources, ideas and expertise and by sharing responsibilities that the international community was able to deliver in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, despite the challenges.

In conclusion, I encourage the members of the Security Council and other partners, such as the European Union, the African Union, South Africa, Turkey and others, to continue to provide the generous assistance that they rendered during the 2006 electoral process. The logistical challenges in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remain. The Council's continued support for the electoral process through financial, technical and other assistance, as well as its endorsement of the Secretary-General's proposals for local elections, will be very critical in that regard.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make comments or ask questions in response to the briefings that we have just heard.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to welcome the presence of Mr. Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union (EU), and to thank him for his briefing. I should also like to thank

Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Mr. Ibrahim Gambari for their briefings.

My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made earlier by the Permanent Representative of Germany, which holds the EU presidency. I will thus limit myself to a few brief observations.

France is pleased to have participated in Operation EUFOR RD Congo, established by the EU at the request of the United Nations to contribute to the security environment at the end of the transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In 2003, France assumed the role of lead nation for the operation that the EU had deployed in Ituri, Operation Artemis. The deployment in 2006 of a new operation headed by another lead nation is a major development for the European Security and Defence Policy. We are pleased that this new stage has been achieved in Africa, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Indeed, the success of the transition process that that country is completing is essential for the stability of the African continent as a whole. Following the transition period, the international community must continue to assist the country. The United Nations and the European Union will each have a role to play during this new period.

The deployment of Operation EUFOR RD Congo also illustrates the usefulness of cooperation between the United Nations and the EU. That cooperation should continue to expand, particularly in the areas of crisis prevention and peacekeeping. In that regard, we should benefit fully from the experience acquired during Operation EUFOR RD Congo.

Finally, my delegation would like to commend the Congolese people for their sense of responsibility, which enabled them to hold elections that went smoothly, and to complete the transition in a generally peaceful atmosphere. The resolve of the Congolese people to take their future into their own hands and the responsible commitment of all Congolese political actors will be the key to the reconstruction and development of the country.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank Mr. Solana for his briefing to the Council, which shows once again the attention that the Council rightly pays to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Belgium welcomes Operation EUFOR RD Congo, in which we took an active part, particularly by providing the Force with information capacities. The EUFOR mission, in support of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), has made a vital contribution, especially through its deterrent effect in establishing the conditions necessary for the smooth conduct of the electoral process, as well as respect for the election results. Its intervention during the August events in Kinshasa demonstrated both its credibility and its impartiality.

Therefore, as we have stated, the EUFOR mission is a good example of the commitment undertaken by the European Union (EU) and the United Nations to cooperate in crisis management, in accordance with the 2003 declaration. A lessons-learned exercise is proving useful and will be carried out at both the European level and the United Nations level. The conclusions of such an assessment — Mr. Guéhenno has already referred to a number of elements — could foster the development of the framework for the relations between the EU and the United Nations.

Belgium believes that the EU's commitment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo should continue in this post-transition period through a strengthened commitment to reform of the security sector. During the European Council meeting held on 15 December 2006, the EU confirmed its readiness to assume a coordinating role in international efforts in the security sector, in close cooperation with the United Nations and with the support of the Congolese authorities.

Belgium duly appreciates the crucial role played by MONUC in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Council should soon take up the question of revising and extending its mandate. Belgium will take an active part in the discussion to redefine the mandate in the new, post-electoral context.

Finally, my delegation remains extremely concerned at the situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, especially the continuing fighting in North Kivu. MONUC should intensify its efforts with a view to a lasting stabilization of that fragile part of the country. Those efforts should, we believe, be further based on a political approach.

Mr. Al-Bader (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like first to most warmly thank the representative of

Germany and Mr. Javier Solana, the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, as well as Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Gambari, for the briefings they have given us here in the Council this morning.

As we have all agreed unanimously, the Security Council will continue to deal closely with the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo even though the historic elections have already been crowned with success. As planned, the Government is now in a building phase, and we are pleased by President Kabila's appointment of Mr. Antoine Gizenga as Prime Minister. We hope most earnestly that he will be welcomed by the people of the country and that the President will be able to complete the formation of a Government that will fully discharge its responsibilities.

The successful formation of the Government will help the Secretary-General to conduct fruitful consultations with the Congolese authorities on the future of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) after its current mandate ends on 15 February 2007. There will be an advent of a new Government for the country, after all the remaining electoral stages have been completed and the Secretary-General has presented a report with useful recommendations to the Council at the end of the month so that it might take an appropriate decision regarding the future MONUC mandate. We hope we can agree on that before mid-February, in accordance with resolution 1671 (2006).

We wish to say how greatly we appreciate the role of the European forces (EUFOR). They have played a crucial role in assisting and supporting MONUC during the presidential elections. That considerably helped to stabilize that enormous country, which is faced with turmoil that continues to beset the country, especially in the east. We hope the situation will be stabilized when the European forces withdraw and that the new Government will be able to work with all the Congolese parties to ensure progress for the country.

With regard to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, we welcome the news of the negotiations among the three factions in Ituri, which is a step along the path to disarmament and the reconstruction of the country. These factions were the Cobra Matata militia, the United National Front and the Revolutionary Congolese Movement. All of this means that it will be possible to reintegrate more than 8,000 men into the armed forces. We would like to say how greatly we appreciate the efforts of MONUC in the efforts currently under way and the agreements concluded with these militias so that the agreement might be consolidated. We also welcome the news that 60 individuals under the dissident General Nkunda, in South Kivu, have also joined the disarmament programme. We hope to have news that is just as satisfactory about the remaining militias.

The humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo does not yet allow us to be optimistic, but rather causes concern. Efforts are still ongoing to help tens of thousands of people displaced from villages, who are benefiting from the assistance of UNICEF and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). OCHA is making considerable efforts to assist them by providing supplies and means for their subsistence. We hope that assistance from donors will continue, especially from the European Union. We hope too that the Democratic Republic of the Congo will continue to receive bilateral assistance or multilateral aid so that the Government might be able to consolidate the pillars for the new authorities, thereby ensuring progress for the country through the use of its natural resources for its own prosperity.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): Allow me to thank the High Representative, Mr. Javier Solana, Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Under-Secretary-General Gambari for their briefings. We wish to commend the European Union for the security provided during the elections period.

The elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the swearing into office of President Joseph Kabila reflect the people's desire for peace, stability and development. Similarly, the consolidation of peace for socio-economic development in the country requires enormous efforts to strengthen its democratic institutions. That is all the more so because poorly functioning institutions entrench corruption, chronic economic mismanagement and repression of opposition, and ill-disciplined and uncontrolled security forces had almost led to the country's collapse.

We welcome the nomination of Mr. Antoine Gizenga, leader of the Unified Lumumbist Party, as Prime Minister. We hope that the Prime Minister will engage in consultations will all political parties, civil

society and other stakeholders to enable him to form a Government of national unity. Similarly, we welcome the election of Mr. Vital Kamerhe as President of the National Assembly, and we look forward to the successful election of state governors, vice-governors and senators.

However, we wish to express concern about the precarious security situation in the eastern part of the country, where the national army force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — the FARDC — and the rebel fighters of the National Integrationist Front — the FNI — are engaged in conflict, particularly in the Ituri district. These armed conflicts have led to an increase in the number of internally displaced persons, forced labour and summary executions. The lack of security has also resulted in frequent violations of human rights and the rule of law. The widespread culture of impunity that allows the repetition of crimes by well-known persons who should be protecting the population is of great concern to us. It is, however, encouraging to note that the Government of Rwanda is mediating talks between the Congolese Government and General Laurent Nkunda's rebel group. We urge both parties to rise above personal and sectional interests and allow peace and stability to return to the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

While commending the United Nations, the European Union, the international community and Congo's development partners for their various contributions to peace and stability in that country, we also express our appreciation to the member countries of the Great Lakes region for having signed a Pact which, hopefully, will pave the way for security, stability and development in the region. The provisions of the Pact, which include a security action plan to disarm rebel groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and along the border areas in the Sudan, Kenya and Uganda, should help to bring peace and stability to the region.

The implementation of the Pact will, however, require financial support and coherent assistance from the international community. It is also of utmost importance that there be follow-up on the national implementation of the legal protocols adopted in the Pact. The protocols on governance, humanitarian and social issues address the cruel violence against women and children, the property rights of returning persons, the protection of internally displaced persons and economic programmes. There is also a non-aggression and mutual defence protocol, under which those countries will not tolerate the presence of insurgents on their territories. Those protocols are of the utmost importance and vital to peace and stability in the region.

Finally, we reiterate the crucial role of the security and judicial sectors in post-conflict Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we urge the Government and its development partners to intensify efforts in the area of judicial and security sector reforms. That will undoubtedly require the support of the major donor partners. We therefore urge the international community not to abandon the Democratic Republic of the Congo prematurely but instead to build a partnership with the newly elected authorities, consolidate peace and promote economic recovery.

Mr. Ikouebe (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to welcome Mr. Solana and to express my deep appreciation for his briefing. I should like also to thank the representative of Germany, who spoke on behalf of the European Union, as well as Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Gambari, for the very useful information that they have provided us this morning. Above all, I should like, as a neighbour of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and on behalf of the African Union, to thank the European Union-led peacekeeping force (EUFOR), which made a significant contribution to the success of the process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There is no doubt that this experience will prove useful in the context of future theatres of operation, in Africa in particular. I should like therefore to reiterate the deep gratitude of my country and of Africa in particular for that very valuable contribution.

Like the majority of those who spoke before me, we welcome the smooth holding of the elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Credit is of course due to the people and the leaders of that country, as well as to the entire international community. When we speak of the international community, let us not forget that Africa itself played an active role in this process. Indeed, proof of this is the role played by countries such as South Africa in organizing the political dialogue that led to the establishment of the transitional institutions, and the role played by that country, as well as by Angola, in the area of military training.

African involvement is also evident from the continent's participation in the International Committee for Support to the Transition (CIAT). Representatives of the Chairman of the African Union and of the Chairman of the African Union Commission have

taken part, along with other members, in CIAT meetings. The subregion itself, the Economic Community of Central African States, has set up, in case of need, a reserve brigade.

However, even as we welcome the success of this process, I would like to stress the need for the international community to continue its efforts. I greatly appreciated the commitment made here by the European Union to continue to support the efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, because there could be very serious consequences if we let up our vigilance.

The elections, as noted earlier, are indeed an important stage, but they are only a stage. That is because most of the major problems still remain to be solved. One was mentioned in particular: that of security sector reform, which will be crucial.

In assessing the situation, we also take account of the results of the second Summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, which just took place at Nairobi. We must from now on consider the process as a whole within the framework of that Conference's outcome. Indeed, the Great Lakes region has been declared a special development zone. The international community is expected to make its contribution, and, in that respect, Europe is a leading partner. We must therefore take into account the regional dimension of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in our discussions in the days to come on the future of MONUC's mandate.

I should like once again to thank the Security Council, the European Union and all of our partners for the great interest they have shown in the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and I urge them to continue their efforts.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, I should like to thank the representative of Germany and Mr. Solana for their respective briefings. I wish also to thank Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Gambari for their briefings.

China wishes to congratulate the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the successful holding of the elections there. China expresses its appreciation to the European Union-led peacekeeping force (EUFOR) for the assistance it provided to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in the accomplishment of parts of MONUC's mandate in the general elections. We deem highly positive the constructive role played by EUFOR in the maintenance of peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Although EUFOR's mandate has expired, we hope that the EU will continue to support the democratic process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, actively provide economic assistance and help the new Government in carrying out security sector reform, so as to make a new round of contributions to the achievement of durable peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is actively engaged in the formation of a new Government, and post-conflict reconstruction will soon be under way. The international community must devote the necessary attention to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. China is in favour of MONUC's continuing to play an important role in the Democratic Republic of the Congo so that the very fragile peace there can be maintained. China will also continue to provide the necessary assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo so as to play its part in the peaceful reconstruction of the country.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): If I may, I should like to thank those who have briefed us, and especially to extend a warm welcome to the High Representative of the European Union.

Let me begin by aligning myself with the statements or comments made earlier on behalf of the European Union by Ambassador Matussek.

What we have heard is a very good and welcome example of the cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations. It is also indicative of the welcome progress being achieved in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno set out very starkly what that represents. What we have to do now is build on it and all of us maintain our strong continuing support for the new Congolese authorities in what is going to be a crucial stage of reconciliation and peace consolidation. It is not unqualified support, however. Again, the Under-Secretary-General set out what we expect of the Democratic Republic of the Congo authorities, and that is absolutely right.

What we look forward to as the Council are recommendations from the Secretary-General as to

how the United Nations should carry forward its support for the Democratic Republic of the Congo in that next phase, and how we can assist and follow up the existing mandate, which expires on 15 February. We are inclined to believe that the principal role will be to maintain stability, to allow the institutions to take root, and to redirect resources towards the priorities. Those must include tackling the activities of the armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo that are at the moment preying on civilians and undermining the chances for lasting peace.

I would also note that the Lord's Resistance Army is in Garamba, for the most part despite the discussions in the Juba process. That remains, for many of us, a keen interest, and one way or another we must tackle that issue, too.

If I may, I should just like to say a few words about European security defence policy. What this operation demonstrates very clearly is the real-world contribution which the European Union is making through that policy to tackling international issues. In many cases, it is in support of and in partnership with the United Nations. That, as far as the United Kingdom is concerned, is one of the major objectives of European security defence policy. It is to project a foreign policy and, as appropriate, a military dimension in support of operations out there which not only conform to common policies of the European Union, but which sit very neatly with objectives of the United Nations. It is the capacity of the European Union as it is now developing to be able to deploy forces rapidly and to do so in an efficient manner, as we have demonstrated in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which actually highlights the path that the European Union can, does and, I hope, will increasingly play.

I put that in stark contrast to what we tend not to do in United Nations peacekeeping, but I do want to flag up that, whereas the European Union and its member States are less active in United Nations peacekeeping, there is another dimension that is very important. The capacity to rapidly deploy when necessary is something which contributes very strongly, I believe, to the international effort.

The European Union battle group concept takes that further forward, the intention being that a battle group could be deployed with 15-days' notice to areas of need. That is a capacity which the United Nations and the world often need, and which is very rarely available, so I very much welcome that development by the European Union.

If I may, I have two specific questions for High Representative Solana. The first concerns the fact that, as the European security defence policy is created, it has a particular link with NATO. I am struck by the fact that one of our institutional problems in the United Nations is how the Organization relates to the African Union not just as we take forward the African Union Mission in Sudan, but also as we move towards the hybrid operation in Darfur, which we all want to see as soon as possible. Are there any lessons from how the European Union has learned to work with other organizations that Mr. Solana might want to share with us to suggest how the United Nations can carry forward that very necessary cooperation with and direct support for a nascent operational capability within the African Union?

Secondly, is what we have heard described this morning potentially an exemplar, a good practice, that one could look at to determine where the European Union might be more active in helping tackle the many different and, in many cases, difficult situations that we confront in Africa?

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to thank the Permanent Representative of Germany and the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, Mr. Javier Solana, for their briefings. I also thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Mr. Ibrahim Gambari.

We join others in expressing our satisfaction at the successful conclusion of a crucial phase in the post-conflict transition process to democracy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In their organization, management and outcome, the elections, which we have repeatedly referred to here and which are the topic of this meeting, represent an important achievement for the authorities and people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that context, it is apt to recognize the decisive contribution of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the significant security, political, diplomatic, military and economic presence of the European Union.

Given the historical background of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and that country's strategic importance in Africa, it is also

important that its democratic transition be carefully planned and to continue to provide support to its authorities in the upcoming phase of elections for the Senate and for provincial governors and deputy governors. We feel it necessary to note that it is now up to the international community, development agencies and the Democratic Republic of the Congo's partners to plan the future of international cooperation so as to help the new democratic Government in the peacebuilding process and to continue the transition towards an integrated society at peace and moving towards development.

We are pleased to recognize the progress that has been made in institutional reform and the interest in strengthening the capacities and legitimacy of the authorities. We are also pleased to note the support role being played by South Africa, a current member of the Security Council.

We are optimistic that internal security, the full rule of law and human rights will be the focus of ongoing attention from the Government and society of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that context, we will closely follow the dialogue and peacebuilding process in that country.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): I, too, wish to welcome Mr. Solana. It is always good to hear him brief on African issues, in which he is deeply involved. We also appreciate the briefings we received from Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Gambari on their support of the process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Everything that has happened so far in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is due to the Congolese people. We wish to pay tribute to the Congolese people for having achieved what they have achieved so far. We look forward to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo taking shape, because we would also like to take our lead from that Government about the way forward. We hope that the support of the European Union will continue in the Congo, because the Congo still has a difficult road ahead. As has been mentioned here, there are still critical elections ahead of us. We as South Africa pledge ourselves to continue to assist the people of the Congo as much as we can on the road ahead.

Finally, I would like to recall what Mr. Guéhenno said in his briefing about our being careful not to move towards early disengagement from the Congo, because experience has shown that the results of early disengagement are sometimes not positive at all.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, first of all, to express my pleasure at seeing you, Mr. President, preside over the Security Council for the month of January, as well as to thank you for convening this important meeting of the Council devoted to the European Union-led force (EUFOR) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I should also like to take this opportunity to welcome the presence among us of Mr. Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, as well as to express my gratitude for his very thorough briefing. I have also listened closely to the statement made by the representatives of Germany on behalf of the European Union, and those of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs.

EUFOR was the second military intervention of the European Union in my country. Operation Artemis in 2003, which included the deployment of the Interim Emergency Multinational Force, managed at the time to stabilize the security and humanitarian situation in Bunia, making it possible to implement the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement on the Transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As others who have spoken before me have pointed out, EUFOR was a military force authorized by the Security Council under resolution 1761 (2006), of 25 April 2006, and deployed by the European Union to support the electoral process on behalf of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

We can say with confidence that EUFOR's record has been largely positive. Elections have been held successfully and the Congolese people have expressed their will in complete freedom, voting in massive numbers in the legislative elections and the two rounds of presidential elections. The transitional period in the Democratic Republic of the Congo came to an end with the inauguration of His Excellency Mr. Joseph Kabila Kabange, the first Congolese President elected through direct universal suffrage. A Prime Minister has been designated, who is preparing to form the future Government. The National Assembly is being

established as we meet, and existing provincial assemblies are preparing to begin their work. Elections for governors and senators are somewhat behind schedule, but they will occur before the end of the month. Other local elections will take place later this year. The structure of the Third Republic is therefore slowly being established. With the success of this undertaking, the United Nations and the European Union have made it possible to establish a truly democratic arena in my country.

The efforts of the European Union are not limited to EUFOR. The European Union is also playing a role through EUSEC, the European Union mission to provide advice and assistance for security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and EUPOL, the European Union Police Mission in Kinshasa. With regard to the organization and holding of elections, we should also acknowledge that the European Union is the main supporter of the Independent Electoral Commission. We should also bear in mind that many members of the European Union and its associated States are also providing assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in many areas on the bilateral level, in close cooperation with the United Nations and the European Union. I would like those countries and our international, continental and regional partners to know how very grateful the Congolese people are for their assistance.

However, the human, material and financial resources devoted to my country by the European Union and the United Nations could be for naught as long as there are dictatorial regimes in the Great Lakes region that have little respect for human rights. For its part, the Democratic Republic of the Congo would like to solemnly renew its commitment to participate in the establishment of peace and security for its own people and for those of neighbouring States. The Democratic Republic intends to fully play its role as a central and pivotal State in international efforts aimed at stabilizing the entire Great Lakes region in particular, and Africa in general.

With the establishment of new institutions, the Congolese people rely on the ongoing support of the international community to continue policies aimed at national reconciliation, economic and social recovery and the rebuilding of the country. The future Congolese Government will soon begin discussions with the United Nations as regards the future of their partnership.

Overall, I can assure the Council that the President of the Republic and the Congolese people want the international community to continue its commitment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We call on the international community — as the High Representative of the European Union and my African colleagues on the Council have done — to continue to provide assistance, including in support of the new institutions, the reform of the national army and police as part of security sector reform, the continuation of disarmament programmes — both the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and rehabilitation and the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration programmes, including those pertaining to child soldiers — judicial sector reform, including human rights, good governance and development, so as to make it possible for the Congolese people to fully benefit from the dividends produced by peace. I am both encouraged and reassured by the renewed commitment of the European Union in that regard.

The international community should also continue to help our country to address factors of instability such as the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and illicit arms trafficking in the region.

Before I conclude, I would like to pay well-deserved tribute to the personnel of EUFOR for their professionalism. Through their remarkable work, they have made possible secure elections while at the same time demonstrating full impartiality. EUFOR has also made it possible to return to peace, calm and stability. EUFOR's military personnel returned home on the scheduled date, with the certainty of having accomplished their mission.

I would also like to thank the Governments of the Gabonese Republic and the sisterly Government of Congo-Brazzaville for the steps they took to facilitate the operations of EUFOR.

With the establishment of new democratically elected republican institutions, our country is today beginning a new phase. However, many challenges remain, and they are enormous. It is important that the support of the international community not let up. We have that opportunity. I would also like to reiterate what was said by Mr. Guéhenno that we have an opportunity and a duty not to repeat certain errors of

the past, including through a hasty withdrawal by the international community. Rather we should strengthen the partnership that has been established with my country in order to build the momentum with a view to contemplating with much more serenity the future of a Congo that is truly democratic, a spearhead of the African renaissance, where more peace, security, justice and prosperity will prevail.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to Mr. Solana to respond to comments made and questions raised.

Mr. Solana: I would like to respond to the two questions posed by the representative of the United Kingdom. I believe that these two questions can be answered very simply with a "yes" to question number one and a "yes" to question number two.

But I would like to be a little more explicit. It is true that the vocation of the European Union is to act in coordination with others, and that has been our manner of action in general terms. Of course, sometimes we have to act on our own, but generally our vocation is to cooperate with others in any operation. We have done so with the African Union with NATO and with the United Nations, in the first place. To my mind, that is the answer to the first question.

As for the second question, which is whether the lessons that we have learned from the EUFOR can be applied to other operations, whether in Africa or elsewhere, the answer is also "yes". The structure of force that we ourselves are organizing, as the Ambassador has said, is a concept that is well prepared for this type of rapid, efficient operation that can open a way for others to follow. In any case, I think that good lessons have already been drawn and more will follow in the future. I hope very much that these lessons will be useful in other parts of Africa where there will be much need in the foreseeable future, in particular in Darfur.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Solana for the clarifications he has provided.

I have no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.5617

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5617th meeting

Wednesday, 10 January 2007, 12.55 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mrs. Nzounka Lekaka
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Jenie
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott Sanders

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Eleventh progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2006/939)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

07-20558 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 12.55 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Eleventh progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2006/939)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Djedje (Côte d'Ivoire), took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2006/939, which contains the eleventh progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire. Members also have before them document S/2007/8, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, China, Congo, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Slovakia, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1739 (2007).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5618

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5618th meeting

Thursday, 11 January 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Jenie
	Italy	Mr. Azzarello
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott Sanders

Agenda

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

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07-20648 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, we will hear a briefing by Ambassador Peter Burian, Permanent Representative of Slovakia, on the activities of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006).

I give him the floor.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): I have the honour to brief the Security Council on the activities of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), of 14 October 2006, concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, for the period 14 October 2006 to 11 January 2007, in accordance with operative paragraph 12 (g) of resolution 1718 (2006).

Following consultations among the members of the Security Council held on 20 October 2006, the Council agreed to elect the Bureau of the Committee for 2006, which consisted of the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations as Chairman and the delegations of Argentina and Qatar providing the two Vice-Chairmen. The Committee started its full operations by holding its first informal meeting on 23 October 2006.

Since its inception, the Committee has been meeting with such frequency as necessary to carry out its duties effectively, and it is expected that it will meet regularly, once a week. During the reporting period, the Committee held nine informal meetings at the expert level. In discharging its mandate, the Committee was guided by paragraph 12 of resolution 1718 (2006).

By operative paragraph 8 (a) (ii) of resolution 1718 (2006), the Security Council decided that all Member States shall prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of items, materials, equipment, goods and technology covered by documents S/2006/814 and S/2006/815, unless within 14 days of the adoption of resolution 1718 (2006) the Committee had amended or completed their provisions also taking into account the list contained in document S/2006/816, circulated on 12 October by the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations.

On 1 November 2006, I informed all United Nations Member States in a note verbale that, pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), the Committee had revised the chemical and biological programmes list, and that a new document — S/2006/853 — now superseded document S/2006/816. The lists of items, materials, equipment, goods and technology listed in documents S/2006/814 and S/2006/815 remained unchanged. Documents S/2006/814, S/2006/815 and S/2006/853 and S/2006/853/Corr.1 may also be accessed on the Committee's web site.

In accordance with its mandate, the Committee is continuing the process of determining additional items, materials, equipment, goods and technology to be specified for the purpose of paragraph 8 (a) (ii) of the resolution, as the members of the Committee have submitted further amendments to the lists in documents S/2006/814, S/2006/815 and S/2006/853.

Paragraph 11 of resolution 1718 (2006) calls upon all States Members of the United Nations to report to the Security Council within 30 days of the adoption of the resolution on the steps that they have taken with a view to implementing effectively the provisions of paragraph 8 of the resolution. As of 10 January 2007, the Committee had received replies from 46 countries and one organization — the European Union — to its note verbale of 1 November 2006 concerning the implementation of resolution 1718 (2006). Replies are being issued as official documents of the United Nations and are accessible electronically through the United Nations Official Documents System and on the Committee web site, unless a State requests that its reply be kept confidential.

Resolution 1718 (2006) tasked the Committee to seek information regarding the actions taken to implement effectively the relevant measures imposed by it, in particular from those States that are producing or possessing the items proscribed in paragraph 8 (a). However, inasmuch as this is a direct and binding requirement of the resolution, all States, irrespective of whether they possess a potential associated with weapons of mass destruction and their means of

delivery and related materials covered by resolution 1718 (2006), are called upon to report to the Security Council Committee on the steps that they have taken nationally to implement the resolution.

The Committee is currently considering draft guidelines for the conduct of its work. This document will be a tool to facilitate the implementation of the measures imposed by the resolution.

While affirming that the primary responsibility for implementing the provisions of resolution 1718 (2006) rests with States, the Committee stands ready to facilitate, when requested, the implementation of those measures. The Committee started its proactive approach in this area when it received letters from the International Air Transport Association and from the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations, dated 27 October 2006 and 3 November 2006 respectively, seeking guidance on or providing notification of a specific case of cooperation with the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea after the adoption of resolution 1718 (2006). The Committee will continue this cooperation with Member States and relevant organizations upon receiving specific requests in this regard.

Owing to keen interest from Member States outside the Council, as well as from many of those represented on the Council, the Committee has addressed the issue of implementing paragraph 8 (a) (iii) of resolution 1718 (2006) concerning the ban on the export of luxury goods to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In this connection, the Committee considered that any definition of luxury goods as may be necessary for Member States to implement that provision of the resolution would be the national responsibility of individual Member States.

The Committee also reaffirmed that the measures contained in paragraph 8 (a) (iii) of resolution 1718 (2006) are not intended to restrict the supply of ordinary goods to the wider population of the country or to have a negative humanitarian impact on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Committee referred Member States to national reports submitted pursuant to operative paragraph 11 of the resolution as cases of national definitions and implementation with respect to luxury goods.

In paragraph 12 (e) of resolution 1718 (2006), the Security Council decided to give a mandate to the Committee to designate additional individuals and entities subject to the measures imposed by paragraphs 8 (d) and 8 (e) of the resolution — targeted financial sanctions and a travel ban, respectively. I wish to inform the Council that during the reporting period the Committee has received no requests for designation on the basis of the criteria contained in those two sub-paragraphs.

Ms. Wolcott Sanders (United States of America): First, the United States would like to commend Ambassador Burian for his superb leadership in setting up and chairing the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006). Ambassador Burian provided steady guidance to members in the Committee's first weeks and conducted his duties with great professionalism and respect for the interests of all Committee members throughout his tenure. My delegation recognizes the tireless efforts he dedicated to the Committee's successful functioning, and we greatly appreciate his commitment.

The United States is concerned that several important issues on the Committee's agenda remain unresolved. Several delegations, including my own, have proposed amendments to the lists of items, materials, equipment, goods and technology prohibited from export to or import from North Korea. For the sake of the credibility of the Committee and the sanctions regime, we wish to see those amendments adopted as quickly as possible. The United States stands ready to work constructively with our fellow Committee members to reach agreement on the outstanding proposals.

My delegation also believes that the Committee's guidelines should be completed as soon as possible — no later than the end of January. Guidelines could be a useful tool for the decision-making of the Committee, but their adoption is not a precondition for Committee or Council action. The United States supports informal meetings to reach consensus on the main pending issues related to the Committee guidelines.

Finally, the United States intends to propose several entities to the 1718 Committee in the very near future and hopes that the submission will be considered expeditiously for designation, pursuant to sub-paragraph 8 (d) of resolution 1718 (2006).

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): I, too, wish to commend the delegation of Slovakia and Ambassador Burian for the excellent work

accomplished since the vote on resolution 1718 (2006) and to thank him for his briefing.

France hopes that the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) can swiftly complete the current work on the adoption of its guidelines, and particularly that it can take up substantive work on a number of important issues. I will cite just three of them.

First, it would be desirable to be begin work on identifying individuals and entities covered by the measures freezing assets and restricting travel. Those provisions of the resolution still have no practical application, two months after its adoption.

Secondly, we must continue to consider more specifically the possible addition of articles to the lists. We have not been able to discuss in detail the proposals that have been made. We must now do that.

Thirdly and finally, while this point is more limited, France believes that the Committee should have already specified that the resolution's provisions do not ban the provision to North Korea of vaccines or basic products — such as toothpaste, for example — containing trace amounts of substances subject to the embargo, such as fluoride. Common sense dictates that it is regrettable not to spell things out, even as States are adopting their measures to implement the resolution at the national level.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): On 14 October, the Council unanimously adopted a Chapter VII resolution condemning the provocative, irresponsible behaviour of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea and in particular the nuclear test of 9 October. Resolution 1718 (2006), taken with our earlier resolution 1695 (2006), underlines powerfully to North Korea why this issue is important and why the international community cares deeply about it and why it has condemned those actions. Since then, the North Korean regime has failed to take the necessary steps to comply with the legal obligations upon it, set out in resolution 1718 (2006).

The Six-Party Talks may remain the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's best opportunity to resolve the issue diplomatically. But let me stress one point: the requirements of both of these resolutions are clear and they are non-negotiable, and North Korea, like all States concerned — that is to say, all of us, the Members of the United Nations — have a legal obligation to comply with the provisions of binding Security Council resolutions.

Resolution 1718 (2006) calls upon all Member States to submit reports to the Council on the steps that they have taken with a view to demonstrating that they are effectively implementing what is set out in the resolution. The United Kingdom put forward its report on 13 November. I understand that 45 other countries have now done likewise. What is necessary — and, I think, what the Council should call for — is that the remaining 146 Member States of the United Nations also promptly submit their reports.

Finally, like others, I should like to thank Ambassador Burian for an outstanding job done in guiding the work of the Committee, setting up the Committee and making sure that it was operational and that it functioned in the first three months of its existence. We are fortunate to have had his leadership and experience in setting up the Committee, as we are with regard to the many other things that he does. We are very grateful to him.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.5619

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5619th meeting

Friday, 12 January 2007, 4 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Congo	Mr. Ikouebe
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Jenie
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Slovakia	Mr. Matulay
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff

Agenda

The situation in Myanmar

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07-20880 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Myanmar

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Myanmar in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Kyaw Tint Swe (Myanmar) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2007/14, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. I should like to draw attention to an oral addition to the fourth preambular paragraph in the revised version: after the word "UNAIDS", the words "United Nations Development Programme" should be added.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution, as orally revised. Unless I hear any objection I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China is firmly opposed to the adoption by the Security Council of the draft resolution on Myanmar. China engaged in extensive discussions and consultations with all Council members, especially the sponsor, in an effort to prevent a vote on it. Regrettably, our suggestions and goodwill failed to prevail. For China, this meeting is the least desirable option. Before the vote, therefore, China would like to reaffirm a number of principled positions.

First, like the rest of the international community, China sincerely hopes that Myanmar enjoys economic development, social harmony, the rule of law and inclusive democracy. That is in the interests of the people of Myanmar, of all countries in South-East Asia and of the entire international community. It cannot be denied that Myanmar is now facing many political, economic and social challenges and that some of its problems are quite serious. But no country is perfect and every country has to go through a process of constant improvement. China therefore supports continuing efforts on the part of the Myanmar Government and all parties in the country aimed at inclusive dialogue and national reconciliation.

So far, the international community, in particular the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), has made many constructive recommendations relating to Myanmar — recommendations that could serve as important guidelines for improving the situation in the country. China sincerely hopes and expects that the Myanmar Government will give due consideration to those recommendations, listen to the call of its own people, learn from the good practices of others and speed up the process of dialogue and reform, so as to achieve prosperity for its nation, bring benefits to its people and contribute to peace, stability and development in South-East Asia.

Secondly, China encourages and supports the Secretary-General's good offices under the mandate of the General Assembly. In recent years, there has, understandably, been growing interest on the part of the international community in Myanmar. China has always believed that the United Nations can play a constructive role in this regard. Thanks to the efforts made by various parties, Under-Secretary-General Gambari paid two visits to the country at Myanmar's sincere invitation. He had frank talks and consultations with Myanmar's leaders and achieved certain progress.

While the United Nations Secretariat is in a transitional period, China supports the appointment by the Secretary-General as soon as possible of a special representative for Myanmar. We are also looking

forward to another visit by Mr. Gambari, and hope that he will continue his dialogue with Myanmar and enhance mutual trust and confidence. As Mr. Gambari emphasized in his briefing to the Council last November, the Secretary-General's good offices are a process of dialogue and engagement, which needs time and patience.

China sincerely calls upon the international community and the Myanmar Government to sustain their current sound interaction, to constructively support the Secretary-General's good offices and to work together to gradually achieve long-term stability and development in Myanmar. The tenth ASEAN summit will be held soon. China will, as always, support ASEAN in playing a leading role in addressing the issue of Myanmar.

Thirdly, the Myanmar issue is mainly the internal affair of a sovereign State. The current domestic situation in Myanmar does not constitute a threat to international or regional peace and security. No one would dispute the fact that Myanmar is, indeed, faced with a series of grave challenges relating to refugees, child labour, HIV/AIDS, human rights and drugs. But similar problems exist in many other countries. If, because Myanmar is encountering this or that problem in the areas to which I referred, it is to be arbitrarily labelled as a prominent or potential threat to regional security, included on the agenda of the Council and be the subject of a draft resolution, then the situations in all other 191 United Nations Member States may also need to be considered by the Security Council. Such an approach is obviously neither logical nor reasonable.

As a matter of fact, all of Myanmar's immediate neighbours, all ASEAN members and most Asia-Pacific countries believe that the current situation in Myanmar does not pose a threat to regional peace and security. Since various relevant United Nations agencies have already held discussions on the Myanmar issue, and given that the primary responsibility entrusted by the United Nations Charter to the Security Council is to maintain world peace and security, China holds that there is no need for the Security Council to get involved. Nor should it take action on the issue of Myanmar. If it does so, it will not only exceed the mandates of the Council, but also hinder discussions by other relevant United Nations agencies, and bring no benefit to the Secretary-General's good offices.

It must be emphasized that China, as an immediate neighbour of Myanmar and a Security Council member from the Asia-Pacific region, attaches no less importance to the situation in Myanmar than do other States. Although Myanmar's domestic political process may not have achieved as many results as expected, progress is undeniably being made, slowly but steadily. As an old Chinese saying goes, one cannot enjoy eating hot bean curd if one is too anxious. While the intention of the international community is sincere and good, it has to be accompanied by practical and feasible ways and means, taking into account the national conditions of Myanmar. Otherwise, there would be unwanted or undesirable consequences. Moreover, if the situation in Myanmar becomes turbulent as a result of external interference, the primary victims will certainly be the people of Myanmar and neighbouring countries.

Therefore, China, together with other countries in the region, wishes to see Myanmar enjoy political stability, economic development and ethnic harmony. China has always adopted a responsible approach and has made vigourous efforts to encourage and facilitate the Myanmar Government to address its problems step by step. It is also our consistent position that the internal affairs of Myanmar should be handled mainly and independently by the Myanmar Government and people themselves through consultation. The international community can offer all kinds of constructive advice and assistance, but should refrain from arbitrary interference.

Based on the above principled position, China strongly opposes the inclusion of Myanmar on the agenda of the Council, and is firmly against adopting any Security Council resolution on Myanmar. China therefore cannot but vote against the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): I regret to inform the Council that South Africa will vote against the draft resolution on Myanmar. My Government decided on this action on the basis of the following three reasons. First, we believe that this draft resolution would compromise the good offices of the Secretary-General in dealing with sensitive matters of peace, security and human rights. Secondly, it deals with issues that would be best left to the Human Rights Council. The third and most fundamental reason for us is that this draft resolution does not fit with the Charter mandate conferred upon the Security Council, which is to deal with matters that are a threat to international peace and security.

Before elaborating on these three reasons, my delegation wishes to make it quite clear that we do not wish to question, to judge or to comment on the content of this draft resolution. For the record, I wish to reaffirm that my delegation is concerned about the situation in Myanmar.

When the General Assembly established the good offices mission of the Secretary-General, it was to make it possible for the United Nations to establish a channel for private and confidential communication. The commendable work done in Myanmar by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Ibrahim Gambari has been made possible through the use of the good offices of the Secretary-General. This draft resolution, should it be adopted, may close forever the window of hope and communication opened by Mr. Gambari.

Furthermore, the draft resolution contains information that would be best left to the Human Rights Council. Ironically, should the Security Council adopt it, that would mean that the Human Rights Council would not be able to address the situation in Myanmar while the Council remains seized with the matter.

Finally, it is worth recalling that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has stated that Myanmar is not a threat to its neighbours. Just yesterday, on 11 January 2007, the ASEAN Ministers meeting in the Philippines reaffirmed that Myanmar is no threat to international peace and security.

For these reasons, South Africa cannot vote in favour of this draft resolution.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): We have before us a draft resolution on the situation in Myanmar, and we are called on to make a decision as to whether or not to adopt this text, which addresses vitally important issues but raises several basic questions.

The first question is one of both substance and procedure — the draft resolution touches on issues such as democratic transition, promotion and protection of human rights, and on social issues such as HIV/AIDS and trafficking in narcotics and people. However, these issues do not make Myanmar a threat to international peace and security. They inflict suffering on the people of Myanmar and create problems for its immediate neighbours, but they do not make the situation in Myanmar a clear and present danger to the rest of the world.

Hence, even if Myanmar is culpable of all these charges, that does not make the situation in that country a proper subject of a United Nations Security Council resolution, especially when compared to situations elsewhere. For there is no denying that there are situations in various other places that are much worse, where so many more people are dying through the direct use of armed force and therefore a much greater threat to world security. These situations should be given higher priority here in this Council. There are other bodies in the United Nations, such as the Human Rights Council, that are more appropriate venues for addressing the problem of Myanmar.

The other basic question is whether the proposed draft resolution is likely to be effective in achieving its goal. No doubt it is directed at very important goals, namely, the restoration of democratic institutions and practices in Myanmar, the achievement of justice for the victims of human rights violations and the attainment of national reconciliation so that Myanmar can move forward as a member of the world community in good standing. Indonesia and all its fellow members of Myanmar in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) share these goals.

But we must pause to think whether the proposed draft resolution would help to achieve that goal. There have been Security Council resolutions that did not achieve their objectives. Before adopting this draft resolution, let us be sure that it is going to be effective.

Indonesia, as a member of ASEAN and on a bilateral basis, has done its best to persuade Myanmar to show concrete and tangible progress towards restoring democracy and human rights. In the context of ASEAN, we have engaged Myanmar on this issue, not on a "you-and-I" basis, but on the basis of "us", as a regional organization in the process of transforming itself into a security community, bound together by shared values, including, and especially, the values of democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We have tried to help Myanmar within the context of the ASEAN family. We have persevered in engaging Myanmar and in encouraging it to restore democracy and demonstrate its respect for human rights, for if there were progress on the ground, we could be of greater help to Myanmar. But that is not the case.

As a member of ASEAN, as a neighbouring country and as member of this Council, Indonesia must now recognize that the issue of Myanmar is no longer

just a bilateral or a regional issue but an international one. It is not a question of solidarity or lack thereof. It is a question of principle. Myanmar must respond to the imperative of restoring democracy and respect for human rights. That is a matter of principle. It is not a matter of winning or losing in the voting on the Council. And it is a matter of principle that we consider whether a resolution by the Security Council will be effective in addressing the problem, or whether this Council is the appropriate body to address the problem of Myanmar.

That does not mean that we cannot act. The United Nations must address the problem of Myanmar, and so must the regional organization to which both Myanmar and Indonesia belong. This is best done through cooperation. The United Nations and regional organizations can work together to address the situation in Myanmar in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

Hence Indonesia supports the good offices of the Secretary-General on Myanmar and welcomes the recent visit of Professor Ibrahim Gambari to the country in the light of those good offices. In our view, the visits have injected new vigour into the efforts of the United Nations to assist Myanmar in its democratic transition. On our part, we will do everything in our power to work within the framework of cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN to help bring about positive change in Myanmar.

In the light of the considerations which I have just mentioned, my delegation will abstain in the voting on this proposed draft resolution.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) *(spoke in Arabic)*: It is a well-known fact that the issues with which the Security Council deals vary in their nature and degree of sensitivity. Sometimes members of the Council can reach a consensus quickly; sometimes views diverge on other issues, such as the draft resolution before us now on the situation in Myanmar, which comes four months after the issue was first placed on the agenda of the Security Council following a procedural vote on 15 September 2006.

The position of Qatar is one of total respect for the Charter of the United Nations and for international law in a manner that promotes the maintenance of international peace and security and the finding of the best possible solutions to the problems that face Member States, with no interference in their internal affairs. That should be done, ideally, when a problem facing a given country has been properly diagnosed and therefore must be dealt with through the competent bodies of the United Nations.

The issue of Myanmar — a country that, we admit, is facing several internal problems — is indeed among the items that are being discussed by the United Nations and that, before their inclusion on the agenda of the Security Council, have been considered by the Third Committee, the Economic and Social Council and the Human Rights Council. My delegation strongly believes that we should continue assisting Myanmar through those competent organs so that it can overcome all of the internal problems facing it. We urge the Government of Myanmar to intensify its efforts to complete its march towards democracy and human rights.

At the same time, we should not ignore the views of neighbouring countries such as the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asian Group, the Group of 77 and China, and the Non-Aligned Movement, which have clearly stated that the issue of Myanmar is an internal problem that does not pose any threat to international peace and security.

For our part, we note that it is an issue related to internal problems, most of which are of a humanitarian character. They are challenges that beset many other countries, and they differ only in degree, not in kind. We understand the efforts made by the sponsors of the draft resolution, which is aimed at taking preventive measures to resolve this situation.

At the same time, we also believe that there is a need to deal justly, effectively and without any selectivity with all of the other issues that do, in fact, constitute threats to international peace and security. The civilians concerned continue to look to the Security Council and to wait for the Security Council to help alleviate their suffering.

On the basis of the humanitarian situation and the process of democratic reform in Myanmar and in view of the latest report of the United Nations, the situation there, although difficult, is indeed improving, though improvement is limited. It is being reviewed by the good offices of the Secretary-General, which we totally support. It is also being reviewed by the competent organs of the United Nations. However, we believe that in order for those efforts to be fruitful, carried out correctly and without duplication or starting from

scratch, an organ such as the Security Council should not encroach on the competences of other organs, given that it shoulders tremendous responsibilities in the area of international peace and security. The Council's resources should be directed towards resolving those problems, and it should not create a precedent that could have negative consequences for international relations.

In the light of all those considerations, my delegation cannot support this draft resolution and will abstain in the voting.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the Russian Federation.

Russia has been consistent in opposing consideration of the issue of Myanmar in the Security Council. While we do not deny that Myanmar has been facing certain problems, particularly in the socio-economic and humanitarian areas, we believe that the situation in that country does not pose any threat to international or regional peace. That view is shared by a large number of States, including, most importantly, those neighbouring Myanmar.

The problems in Myanmar that are mentioned in the draft resolution before the Security Council are being considered within the framework of other bodies of the United Nations system, particularly by the General Assembly and its Third Committee, the Human Rights Council, the International Organization for Migration, the World Health Organization and other relevant organs. Duplication of their efforts by the Security Council would be counterproductive and would not facilitate the division of labour between the main bodies of the world Organization which is provided for in the Charter of the United Nations or the development of their constructive cooperation. We deem unacceptable any attempt to use the Security Council to discuss issues outside its purview.

For all those reasons, the Russian delegation will vote against the draft resolution that is before the Security Council.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/2007/14, as orally revised.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, France, Ghana, Italy, Panama, Peru, Slovakia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

China, Russian Federation, South Africa

Abstaining:

Congo, Indonesia, Qatar

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The result of the voting is as follows: 9 votes in favour, 3 against and 3 abstaining. The draft resolution has not been adopted, owing to the negative votes of permanent members of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council wishing to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Wolff (United States of America): The United States is deeply disappointed by the failure of the Council to adopt this draft resolution. The draft resolution would have been a strong and urgently needed statement by the Security Council about the need for change in Burma, whose military regime arbitrarily arrests, tortures, rapes and executes its own people, wages war on minorities within its own borders and builds itself new cities, while looking the other way as refugee flows increase, narcotics and human trafficking grow and communicable diseases remain untreated.

The deteriorating humanitarian and political situation in Burma affects, first and foremost, the people of Burma. Today the United States reiterates its support for them. However, we also believe that the situation in Burma does pose a risk to peace and security beyond its borders. On Monday, when the Council met with the Secretary-General, delegations here called on the international community — and here I borrow an expression from one of my colleagues — to "grasp the challenge of development, security and democracy and human rights in a holistic manner", and for the Security Council to act in cooperation with the other organs of the United Nations. The draft resolution we just voted on would, in our view, have done just that.

The draft resolution would have contributed to stability in the region by providing its clear support for the Secretary-General's good offices mission, which is intended to provide a framework for constructive dialogue between the United Nations and the Burmese regime leading to concrete progress. Under-Secretary-General Gambari specifically asked this body for our

support. We are disappointed that today we have been unable to respond to his request.

However, while Council members may have disagreed over whether this body should address the situation in Burma, there is no disagreement over the urgent and compelling need for tangible change in Burma. We agree on the importance of the Secretary-General's good offices mission in promoting peaceful change in Burma and on the need for the Burmese regime to take prompt and concrete action on the requests made by Under-Secretary-General Gambari in his two visits to Burma — specifically the initiation of an inclusive national political dialogue representing all parties and ethnic groups, the release of all political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the cessation of military violence against ethnic minorities and the loosening of restrictions on the work of international humanitarian organizations in Burma.

We count on all Council members, including those who did not vote in favour of the draft resolution, to use all their influence to press the Burmese regime for change. We must all recommit to supporting the Secretary General's good offices mission and to convince the Burmese leadership to respond in a concrete and positive way to these moderate and achievable goals. If the Burmese leadership chooses to take these steps, it will find the United States and other Council members ready and willing to cooperate.

The problems in Burma cannot be ignored. The United States will continue to work throughout the United Nations system to try to address the deplorable conditions in Burma.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): I regret the Council's failure to adopt this draft resolution. My regret is that the draft resolution has been rejected despite what I believed to be an agreement among members of the Council. We share a deep concern over the plight of Burma's people. We know that the lack of political progress, the continued detention of their democratically elected leaders, the attacks on civilians and the restrictions placed on humanitarian organizations have all exacerbated the situation of the people of Burma/Myanmar. We all support the good offices mission of the Secretary-General to promote political change. We want to see a better future for a beleaguered people.

Our disagreement is one of competence. Is this a valid issue for decision by the Security Council? The British Government believes that the situation in Burma/Myanmar represents a threat to regional peace and security and to the security of the Burmese people. We therefore voted for a draft resolution that we believed to be within the responsibilities of the Council. But we do not claim an exclusive Security Council interest. Other organs — the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations — all have a key role to play in tackling the problems affecting Burma/Myanmar, be they HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, displaced persons and refugees, abject poverty, drugs, vulnerable children and so on.

The United Kingdom wants to see a strengthened relationship between the United Nations family and Burma/Myanmar. That should include working for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, which are woefully behind in that country, and a political process to establish democratic institutions, the rule of law and respect for human rights. I hope that this is the signal that is heard in Myanmar, and that there is a positive response from Nay Phi Taw. We urge the Council, for its part, to continue to monitor the situation in Burma/Myanmar, which I note is not an impediment to consideration by any other part of the United Nations family.

Mr. Mantovani (Italy): Italy voted in favour of the draft resolution because it profoundly shares the concerns expressed in the text on the grievances that so deeply affect the people of Myanmar. Those concerns are reflected in the European Union's common position on Myanmar. Italy believes that it is now time to call for accelerated progress in a number of problematic areas.

But let me clearly state our view that in the case of Myanmar, punitive approaches have not yielded satisfactory results and should not be sought by the Council. While we remain convinced that a consensual attitude would have been more effective, Italy strongly calls for increased dialogue in the future to overcome misperceptions and to achieve the goal that we all share, namely the prosperity of Myanmar and of its people.

Mr. Ikouebe (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Last September, my delegation cast a negative vote with regard to the procedural decision that led to the inscription of the situation in Myanmar on the Council's agenda. That position is in line with that of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Myanmar's

neighbouring countries in the context of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Those countries believe that the situation in Myanmar does not constitute a threat to international peace and security.

Quite logically, Congo could have voted today against the draft resolution that has just been rejected. That was our intention. However, in the spirit of reconciliation, my delegation preferred to abstain, in the hope that the sponsors of the draft resolution would be able to find other ways to address this problem, which pertains above all to the competency and sovereignty of Member States. In any case, we believe this matter falls under the purview of other United Nations bodies other than the Security Council.

My delegation would therefore encourage the Secretary-General's good offices mission to improve the situation in the country through dialogue. To date, the mission being carried out by Mr. Gambari has helped us to discern real and encouraging prospects. We continue to support those efforts.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): As an elected member of the Security Council, Ghana is highly sensitive to the need to respect the jurisdiction and competence of each organ of the United Nations. We recognize that only an orderly and disciplined United Nations can carry out effectively and impartially the mandate entrusted to it by the Charter.

Ghana was mindful of all that when, after careful consideration, we decided to vote in favour of the inscription of the situation in Myanmar on the agenda of the Security Council. Indeed, we are of the view that the maintenance of international peace and security in today's radically changed world necessarily involves addressing complex challenges that are cross-cutting and interrelated. We believe that there is no other route to a peaceful and secure world built on freedom, justice and prosperity for all.

In that regard, we are also convinced that the interests of humankind can best be served by the United Nations when the various organs and subsidiary bodies are more devoted to complementing each others' efforts. We should not overlook the fact that, in recent times, this Council has dealt with many intra-State conflicts. Above all, in their endeavours, the various United Nations organs must never lose sight of the underlying principles and objectives enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

It is for those reasons that Ghana voted in favour of the draft resolution urging the military authorities in Myanmar to cooperate with the Secretary-General's good offices and open up the political space for an inclusive national dialogue among all stakeholders. That is the only way to bring an end to the situation in Myanmar. We hope that the authorities in Myanmar will respond positively to the minimal requirements of peace, as outlined in the rejected draft resolution.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium regrets that the draft resolution submitted to us was not adopted. Belgium feels that the Security Council is legitimately seized of the question of Myanmar.

Belgium's fundamental objective in voting in favour of the draft resolution was to support the Secretary-General's efforts. Indeed, Belgium believes that the draft resolution contained all the elements necessary to supporting his good offices. The draft resolution would, on the one hand, have allowed for a clear presentation to the Burmese Government of the expectations of the Security Council and the international community, especially with respect to the resumption of a political dialogue extending to all political parties; on the other hand, it would have identified practices to be corrected, including the violent repression of minorities, the eradication of forced labour, and the release of political prisoners.

My Government believes that the draft resolution is a necessary appeal to the Government of Myanmar to respond constructively to the Secretary-General's proposals. It is essential that the Secretary-General's good offices and dialogue continue in the interests of the people of Myanmar and of international peace and security.

Mr. Matulay (Slovakia): We are concerned about the deteriorating situation in Myanmar, including the massive violations of human rights, which, if not addressed adequately, might grow into an intra-State conflict with consequences for the entire region.

We reaffirm our call on the Government of Myanmar to keep to its promised road map to democracy, outlined in 2004, leading to a genuine democratic transition and national reconciliation, as well as to take concrete and measurable steps to address other areas of international concern, including human rights abuses, forced relocation and forced labour. We strongly support the efforts of the regional

partners in trying to find ways for Myanmar to respond to the situation, and urge the Government of Myanmar to give its full cooperation to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

My delegation therefore voted in favour of the non-punitive draft resolution submitted by the United States and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): France voted in favour of the draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom and the United States. We regret that the Security Council was not able to adopt it, because we feel that the situation in Burma calls for the international community's serious concern with respect to important aspects of the Security Council's responsibilities.

Conflict persists between the Burmese army and various armed factions, with repercussions beyond the country's borders. Refugees have fled the country, in particular to Thailand, leading to border incidents and facilitating drug production and trafficking from Burma. The Council cannot remain indifferent to the situation of civilians in conflict zones where such serious disturbances are taking place.

The deadlock of the political process in Burma is not sustainable in the long term and can only aggravate the situation. There is a real danger to the stability of the country and, beyond, of the region, which remains fragile. Only a genuine process of national reconciliation involving all parties, in particular the National League for Democracy and representatives of ethnic minorities, can offer the country the democracy, peace and development to which all Burmese aspire. In that context, France regrets in particular the increasing number of obstacles set up to the work of the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations.

With its European Union partners, France will continue closely to follow the situation in Burma, including with regard to human rights. We will also ensure that the provisions of Security Council resolutions relating to the protection of civilians and children in armed conflict are respected.

In conclusion, France reaffirms its full support for the Secretary-General's mission of good offices and pays tribute to the work of Mr. Ibrahim Gambari in that regard. My delegation stresses the importance it attaches to that mission being continued.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): When Panama accepted the responsibility of assuming a seat on the Security Council, it did so with a view not to imposing its own national criteria, but to acting on behalf of and for the Members of the Organization in respect to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Given that understanding of its responsibility to the international community, Panama expresses its concern today about the pressure that has been exerted in the Council's decision-making on the matter at hand. We regret to say that we do not have a clear grasp of the factors that led to this situation. We are concerned that the topic on which we have decided today far transcends the situation in Myanmar. The topic we are addressing is the functions and mandate of this Council, and specifically its capacity to act preventively and in conformity with the scope and range of Articles 32, 33 and 34 of the United Nations Charter.

We are all aware of the important changes that have occurred in the international situation since the Charter was adopted. We are discussing — and will discuss in future — threats to international security. We recently had a debate in this Chamber on this very issue. We also have to discuss the functions of the various bodies of the United Nations in the face of these new realities. In particular, we have to discuss the functions of the Security Council, which is its responsibility. I hope that when we have that discussion we will understand that all of these bodies should act as part of a whole and not in a segregated and individual fashion.

With regard to the vote in favour of the draft resolution, Panama would like to go on record that we voted on the understanding that the resolution incorporated the views of the neighbouring countries and of the Non-Aligned Movement, namely, that Myanmar currently is not a threat to international peace and security. We cast our vote on the understanding that this draft resolution did not prevent action by other bodies of the Organization, particularly action by the Human Rights Council — although we would have preferred greater clarity on that particular point. We cast our vote on the understanding that the draft resolution had the intent to give support — and succeeded in so doing — to the good offices of the Secretary-General currently under way with the authorities of Myanmar.

Panama regrets that we have not been able to reach consensus on this item, and we feel that in this we have all failed.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Myanmar.

Mr. Swe (Myanmar): The Security Council should be proud of what transpired today. If there is a justifiable occasion for a permanent member to cast a negative vote, this is certainly the occasion. We are gratified that two permanent members — both of whom know full well the actual situation of my country and one of whom is an immediate neighbour of Myanmar — have chosen to do so. I am most grateful to both the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation for their strong position of principle. I also greatly appreciate the four elected members who, in the face of tremendous pressure, either voted against or abstained — South Africa, Congo, Indonesia and Qatar.

The Member States of the United Nations have conferred on the Security Council the primary responsibility for maintenance of international peace and security, pursuant to Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations. There are many issues that deserve — in fact demand — the immediate and undivided attention of the Security Council. By no stretch of imagination is Myanmar among them.

Myanmar does not pose any threat to international peace and security. In fact, we have been able to contribute to regional stability by bringing to a virtual end the insurgency that has plagued the country for almost five decades. Of 18 major insurgent groups, 17 groups, numbering approximately 100,000, have now returned to the legal fold. The Karen National Union (KNU) is the only major insurgent group fighting the Government. Even to that insurgent group, the Government extends a hand of welcome and has invited them to return to the legal fold. Negotiations are going on right now. We conduct counter-insurgency campaigns only against those KNU insurgents who are engaged in acts of terrorism.

Myanmar has close and cordial relations with all her five neighbours and other countries in the region and beyond. It does not engage in any activity aimed at undermining the peace and security of any country. All this is attested to by Myanmar's neighbours and countries in the region. This position is also strongly held by the 118 members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). The Chairman of the Coordinating Bureau of NAM wrote to the President of the Council in July 2006 that

> "the Non-Aligned Movement stresses once again that the decision by the Security Council to initiate formal or informal discussion on the situation in any Member State of the United Nations or on any issue that does not constitute a threat to international peace and security as contrary to Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Movement does not consider the situation in Myanmar constitutes a threat to international peace and security, and opposes attempts by a member of the Council to categorize Myanmar as such."

The Movement again wrote to the President of the Security Council on 8 December and reiterated this firm position and added that it was confirmed at the fourteenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement recently held in Havana.

The draft resolution, had it been adopted, would have created a dangerous precedent. It would also have clearly exceed the mandate given by the Charter to the Council and would have undermined the Council's authority and legality. We are glad that the Council has chosen not to do that today.

To have adopted the draft resolution would also have been to act on information that is patently false. It portrayed the situation in Myanmar "in particular, HIV/AIDS, avian flu and trafficking in narcotics and people" as transnational threats. That was language was changed later to "international risks". It also claimed that "the overall situation in Myanmar has deteriorated and poses serious risks to peace and security in the region". Nothing could be further from the truth.

According to the UNDP Human Development Report, Myanmar's economy grew at an average of 5.7 per cent over the last 14 years and Myanmar has been elevated from a country with low human development to a country enjoying medium human development. The allegations with regard to HIV/AIDS, avian flu and trafficking in narcotics and people have been proved to be patently untrue by United Nations reports. Moreover, the issues of HIV/AIDS, avian flu and trafficking in narcotics are also global challenges that need to be addressed with the cooperation of the entire international community.

The draft resolution also made allegations of attacks in ethnic majority regions on civilians, including women and children, and in particular the attacks on civilians in Karen State. This is a complete falsehood. The Government has taken the United Nations Country Team and the diplomatic corps, including a representative of the United States Embassy, to these areas. The civilians who were victims of the attacks by the insurgents clearly stated that perpetrators of these attacks were members of the Karen National Union. I also wish to say that we have invited Under-Secretary-General Gambari to go to these areas and see with his own eyes the real situation there.

As part of the national reconciliation process, the Government has been implementing development activities in the border areas, which were previously inaccessible to the Government because of various insurgencies. These are the areas where the ethnic nationalities live. The Government has spent over 65 billions kyats and 550 million dollars for development works for the progress of border areas and ethnic national races. Because of these national reconciliation efforts, the representatives of the 17 former insurgent groups — all of whom belong to the ethnic national groups — have joined the National Convention to draw up the basic principles to be enshrined in the new constitution. Here I wish to say that our National Convention process is inclusive. We have also invited the NLD to join, but at the last minute they declined to do so.

Myanmar is successfully building national unity and at the same time laying a firm foundation for a democratic society. It is both a complex and a delicate process, which is fully understood by our neighbours in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The joint communiqué of the 39th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, of 25 July 2006, clearly stated that ASEAN recognizes that

> "Myanmar needs both time and space to deal with its many and complex challenges. ASEAN hopes that Myanmar's efforts to deal with those challenges will progress so that Myanmar can effectively engage the international community, and in this regard ASEAN would remain constructively engaged."

It is claimed that the draft resolution was aimed at providing strong support for the Secretary-General's good-offices mandate. The truth of the matter is that the draft would not in any way have helped the good-offices mandate that the General Assembly gave the Secretary-General. It must also be noted that the visits to Myanmar of Under-Secretary-General Gambari under the good-offices role of the Secretary-General mandated by the General Assembly are also providing concrete results.

In his November 2006 briefing to the Security Council regarding his visit to Myanmar, Mr. Gambari mentioned a number of key areas where he hoped to see progress — among them "the release of a significant number of political prisoners", including "the five 88 Student Generation activists arrested in September". On 3 January, the Government of Myanmar granted amnesty to 2,831 prisoners. This was welcomed by the Secretary-General in a press statement. On 11 January, the international media gave wide coverage to the release of the five individuals mentioned by Under-Secretary-General Gambari.

I wish to conclude by reiterating our great appreciation to our friends who have chosen to safeguard the sanctity of the Charter by expressing their strong principled position through their votes today. We regard them not only as friends of Myanmar but also as friends of developing countries and friends of multilateralism. I would like to reaffirm that Myanmar will continue on the path that the Government and the people have set for themselves. The National Convention — the first, crucial step of our seven-step road map — is essentially complete. We will resolutely implement the seven-step political road map to its successful completion.

Cooperation with the United Nations is the cornerstone of Myanmar's foreign policy. We are encouraged by today's Security Council decision. We will continue our cooperation with the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5620

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 January 2007

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 5620th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 16 January 2007, at 10 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 16 January 2007, the Security Council, pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B, held its 5620th meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

"The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Dmitry Titov, Director of the Africa Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

"Members of the Council, Mr. Titov and representatives of participating troop-contributing countries had an exchange of views."

07-21000 (E) 160107

United Nations S PV 5621

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5621 st meeting

Tuesday, 16 January 2007, 1.10 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Li Kexin
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Azzarello
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Qahtani
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Whineray
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott Sanders

Agenda

The situation in Chad and the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on Chad and the Central African Republic pursuant to paragraphs 9 (d) and 13 of Security Council resolution 1706 (2006)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

07-21045 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 1.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Chad and the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on Chad and the Central African Republic pursuant to paragraphs 9 (d) and 13 of Security Council resolution 1706 (2006) (S/2006/1019)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Central African Republic, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Poukré-Kono (Central African Republic) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I wish to draw the attention of members to document S/2006/1019, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on Chad and the Central African Republic pursuant to paragraphs 9 (d) and 13 of Security Council resolution 1706 (2006).

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council reiterates its concern about the continuing instability along the borders between the Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic and about the threat which this poses to the safety of the civilian population and the conduct of humanitarian operations.

"The Security Council takes note of the Secretary-General's report of 22 December 2006 (S/2006/1019), which contains preliminary recommendations on the deployment of a multidimensional United Nations presence in eastern Chad and north-eastern Central African Republic. It notes the position taken by the Central African and Chadian authorities in favour in principle of such a presence and looks forward to their continued engagement in preparing for it.

"The Security Council notes the Secretary-General's intention to authorize the immediate return of the technical assessment mission to the region in order to complete its observations that were curtailed on security grounds and requests him to submit, by the middle of February 2007, updated and finalized recommendations on the size, structure and mandate of a United Nations multidimensional presence.

"To accelerate preparations for an early decision on the possible deployment of a multidimensional United Nations presence, the Security Council requests that the Secretary-General deploy as soon as possible an advance mission to Chad and the Central African Republic, in consultation with their Governments, as envisaged in paragraph 88 of his report."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2007/2.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5622

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Provisional

5622nd meeting
Tuesday, 23 January 2007, 12.20 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Li Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Sulaiti
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff

Agenda

Letter dated 22 November 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2006/920)

Report of the Secretary-General on the request of Nepal for United Nations assistance in support of its peace process (S/2007/7)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

07-21758 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 12.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 22 November 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2006/920)

Report of the Secretary-General on the request of Nepal for United Nations assistance in support of its peace process (S/2007/7)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Nepal, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Acharya (Nepal) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them documents S/2006/920, containing a letter dated 22 November 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, and S/2007/7, containing the report of the Secretary-General on the request of Nepal for United Nations assistance in support of its peace process.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2007/30, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, China, Congo, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Slovakia, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1740 (2007).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5623

Security Council

Distr.: General
24 January 2007

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 5623rd (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 24 January 2007, at 10 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"At its 5623rd meeting, held in private on 24 January 2007, the Security Council considered the item entitled 'The situation in Georgia'.

"The President, with the consent of the Council, invited the representative of Germany to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, the President, with the consent of the Council, extended an invitation under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean Arnault, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Georgia and Head of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia.

"The members of the Council heard a briefing by Mr. Jean Arnault."

07-21985 (E) 240107

United Nations S/PV.5624

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5624th meeting

Thursday, 25 January 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Bader
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

07-22082 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. I give the floor to Mr. Gambari.

Mr. Gambari: The former Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, presented his final report on this subject (S/2006/956) to the Council in early December. This briefing will cover events that have occurred since then, in a period of heightened levels of instability and suffering combined with a renewed sense of international urgency to find a political way ahead, as evidenced by the visits of Secretary Condoleezza Rice and High Representative Javier Solana to the region, the proposed meeting of the Quartet on 2 February in Washington, D.C., and a possible early tripartite meeting of President Abbas, Prime Minister Olmert and Secretary Rice. I am also encouraged by reports that Foreign Minister Livni will soon be meeting President Abbas in Davos. The Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council have also been engaged in the search for a renewed and credible dialogue towards the resolution of this intractable conflict.

Both President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert have been working hard to try to ease tensions and move towards a resumption of political dialogue. The ceasefire agreed to at the end of November in Gaza remains in place, although, according to Israeli officials, militants have fired more than 104 rockets into southern Israel during the past two months. In the face of those attacks, the Israeli Government has, to its credit, shown considerable restraint. Despite its flaws, the ceasefire has significantly reduced violence, and we encourage the parties to try to build on it.

The ceasefire has not, however, been extended to the West Bank. Indeed, operations to arrest or kill wanted Palestinians continue on a regular basis in West Bank population centres, as evidenced by the Israel Defense Forces raid on Ramallah on 4 January, in which 5 Palestinians were killed and 35 were injured. During the reporting period, 28 Palestinians were killed and over 130 were injured in Israeli military operations, while 10 Israelis were injured by Palestinian militants.

Efforts led by Egypt are continuing on an arrangement to secure the release the Israeli corporal captured last summer and of Palestinian prisoners in Israel, but so far these have not yielded results.

Nevertheless, President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert met on 23 December in Jerusalem. They agreed to revive the joint committees established in the Sharm el-Sheikh understandings and to resume the work of the quadripartite security committee between Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Egypt and the United States. Prime Minister Olmert also undertook to transfer to the Office of President Abbas $100 million of the more than half a billion dollars of Palestinian clearance revenues being withheld by Israel. He also agreed to intensity efforts to upgrade the crossings between the Gaza Strip and Israel, to ease procedures at a number of checkpoints in the West Bank and to remove a number of roadblocks.

Implementation of those understandings is proceeding slowly. Israel has in the past few days transferred the $100 million. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has reported a modest easing in the operation of a few West Bank checkpoints, but the anticipated removal of the roadblocks has yet to materialize.

Access and movement need to be improved. During the first 16 days of 2007, average exports out of Karni stood at approximately 46 trucks a day. This represents an improving trend, but still reflects only 11 per cent of the Agreement on Movement and Access target of 400 per day. We encourage further progress on that front. During the same period, Rafah was opened, primarily for pilgrims, for just 32 per cent of the scheduled opening hours. Finally, there has been no

discernable improvement in movement for Palestinians in the West Bank. According to OCHA, the number of barriers currently on the ground — 527 — represents a 25 per cent increase over the course of 2006.

The Government of Israel approved the repopulation of a settlement deep in the Jordan Valley by 30 families evacuated from Gaza in 2005; such a relocation is in violation of the Road Map. The decision was put on hold after international protests, but settlement activity continues. According to official Israeli figures, the number of West Bank settlers, excluding those in East Jerusalem, has increased by nearly 6 per cent since 2005. Moreover, the Government's pledges to remove outposts remain unfulfilled, and the construction of the barrier on the occupied Palestinian territory continues, despite the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.

It is important, by way of context, to note that the evolving Israeli-Palestinian dialogue is complicated by the internal political situation both in the occupied Palestinian territories and in Israel.

In the occupied Palestinian territories, the pendulum has swung between worsening civil conflict and renewed efforts to forge national unity. Factional tension rose to acute levels in mid-December and again in early January. Deplorable incidents included the killing of three children as they were being taken to school; a shoot-out between gunmen at the Rafah terminal as Prime Minister Haniyeh returned from a regional tour; and a siege at the home of an official in Gaza, which resulted in the killing of the official and several others. In total, 43 people were killed in Palestinian-on-Palestinian internal conflict during the reporting period, nearly double the number killed by Israeli military operations.

Internal violence has been accompanied by heightened negative political rhetoric and threats and the strengthening of factional forces. President Abbas announced that the Hamas-affiliated special executive force, under the Ministry of the Interior, is illegal unless immediately integrated into existing security services. Tensions also flared in late December. The President called for early presidential and parliamentary elections unless agreement could be reached on a national unity government. Nevertheless, each time factional fighting has threatened to spin out of control, President Abbas and Prime Minister Haniyeh have managed to reach understandings to de-escalate the tensions, which is a positive development.

Efforts to form a Palestinian national unity government have resumed, involving dialogue in Gaza as well as in Damascus. It appears that the main issues of disagreement are over control of the Ministry of the Interior and the strength of the language concerning the commitment to Arab and international resolutions. It should also be noted that, while refusing to countenance recognition of Israel, exiled Hamas leader Khaled Mashal recently told news outlets that Israel's existence was a reality and that, with the formation of a Palestinian State within the 4 June 1967 borders, "there will remain a State called Israel; this is a matter of fact".

President Abbas recently met Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad in Damascus and subsequently met Khaled Mashal. A joint statement was issued after the meeting with Mashal, stating that progress had been made towards the formation of a national unity government and calling for an end to internal fighting. The statement also rejected the concept of an interim Palestinian State with provisional borders. President Abbas subsequently reaffirmed that early elections remain on the table if a national unity government is not formed.

Turning to Israeli political developments, a number of political scandals and other developments have underscored the difficulties that the coalition Government is facing in forging and implementing a clear agenda. The Chief of Staff of the Israel Defense Forces, Dan Halutz, resigned, and an official inquiry into the conduct of last summer's war with Hizbollah is continuing. The campaign for Chairman of the Labour Party — the junior coalition partner — is under way in preparation for primaries in May. Several senior ministers have publicly discussed their views and plans on how to carry forward the political process. This has highlighted both growing Israeli interest in addressing the conflict through negotiations and internal divisions over precisely how to do so.

I am pleased, however, to report that regional and international leaders have intensified their engagement in the Israeli-Palestinian arena. There have been consultations among a number of countries in the region, including President Mubarak's meeting with Prime Minister Olmert on 4 January.

The fifteenth anniversary of the 1991 Madrid Conference was marked by a conference sponsored by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in which prominent regional and international personalities and senior European and United Nations officials participated. They discussed options for trying to bring about progress towards a permanent status agreement and a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace.

As I mentioned earlier, United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently visited the region and announced that she would soon bring Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas together to discuss "the political horizon". She expressed her commitment to addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the importance of a revitalized Quartet. The European Union High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, also visited the region last week, as I mentioned earlier. The Secretary-General will attend a Quartet principals meeting on 2 February in Washington, D.C., and Quartet envoys met yesterday in Paris. The Government of Syria has publicly called in recent months for a resumption of negotiations with Israel. I should add that, on 16 January, the Israeli press published understandings for a peace agreement between Israel and Syria, which were supposedly arrived at through a private initiative. The Governments of Israel and Syria have strongly denied any official connection with that initiative.

Concerning aid and the socio-economic situation, I wish to mention that it is exactly a year today since Palestinian legislative elections brought the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority Government to power, leading to a reassessment of donor programmes and the cessation of financial transfers by Israel. It should be noted, however, that international aid to the Palestinians has actually increased; what is different is that aid is mostly bypassing the Palestinian Government.

In the past year, the International Monetary Fund estimates that donors provided over $700 million in budget support. Over half of this came from Arab League member States through direct contributions to the Office of the President. The remainder was mainly provided by Western donors through the temporary international mechanism (TIM) and bilateral donations. The TIM, designed to provide emergency support to social sectors, is currently in its seventh month and has so far disbursed $266 million. The international community channelled a further $450 million, equivalent to approximately 11 per cent of Palestinian gross domestic product (GDP), in life-sustaining humanitarian programmes to Palestinians through United Nations agencies and NGOs.

The total assistance to Palestinians last year, not including funds channelled to the Palestinian Authority Government or Hamas by regional donors, reached around $1.2 billion. That is nearly a 10 per cent increase in aid over 2005. Humanitarian assistance alone doubled since 2004, taking mainly the form of food aid and cash-for-work programmes. However, real GDP per capita declined by at least 8 per cent in the past year. Poverty levels increased by 30 per cent. Public institutions that we in the international community built up have been severely weakened by a lack of operational funds, energy shortages and military damage.

The worsening situation on the ground underscores the limits of what international assistance can accomplish. Without greater freedom of access and movement and without the political process that is carrying the parties towards a two-State solution, the most that aid can do is to contain, for a limited time, the spread of grievances and the spread of instability. The experience of the past year shows that this type of investment brings rapidly diminishing returns.

Turning to Lebanon, the Secretary-General is today attending the Paris III conference, where he will be reiterating the strong support of the United Nations for Lebanon and urging redoubled efforts by all sides to return to dialogue and to break the paralysing political impasse.

The demonstrations that began in Beirut on 1 December 2006 had largely been peaceful until last Tuesday, 23 January. Following a call from the opposition for a general strike, thousands of Lebanese from opposing political factions faced each other, often violently, on the streets. Few regions of the country were spared by the unrest that led to at least 3 dead and over 100 injured, some very seriously. Major roads throughout the country, and in particular in Beirut and its airport, were effectively blocked by burning tires and earth barriers. A tense calm returned to Beirut yesterday following the decision by the opposition to suspend the strike, but tensions remain high. However, the opposition has stated that further escalation will occur unless the Government accedes to its demands.

The events of 23 January showed how easily political tensions can spill over into violence. We are

greatly concerned regarding those risks and the effect they have on the stability and security of Lebanon, which all sides state they wish to maintain. We remain in contact with all parties, we encourage an early return to dialogue and we support the continuing efforts, including the efforts of the Arab League and its Secretary-General, Amre Moussa, to bring the leaders to compromise and consensus.

General stability has returned to southern Lebanon due to the deployment of the enhanced United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the Lebanese Armed Forces, which continue to have a high level of cooperation. The Lebanese army is now playing a crucial role in the south, as well as in Beirut and other parts of the country, including Lebanon's eastern and northern borders. This makes it even more important that the support promised to the army by the international community be delivered, and delivered in a timely manner.

UNIFIL continues to maintain good relations with the Israel Defense Forces. However, Israeli air violations of Lebanese airspace continue. That damages the credibility of both UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces. We again urge Israel to cease those violations.

Civilians continue to be killed and injured by the cluster munitions dropped on Lebanon during last year's conflict. During the month of December, incidents led to the death of 3 people and the injury of 21 others, including 5 children and 2 Belgian peacekeepers. The United Nations is continuing its programme to identify and remove unexploded ordnance in southern Lebanon. As of today, at least 840 individual cluster strike locations have been identified, with each strike location containing up to hundreds of individual bomblets or sub-munitions.

The Secretary-General has designated Major-General Claudio Graziano of Italy as UNIFIL Force Commander to succeed Major-General Alain Pellegrini. The handover ceremony is scheduled to take place on 2 February 2007.

In conclusion, I wish to observe that none of us in this Chamber, outside of it or worldwide can afford another year like the last one that we witnessed in Lebanon and the Middle East. Therefore, we believe strongly that a resumed political process between Israel and the Palestinians is a clear priority. The Secretary-General encourages the two leaders to build on their progress to date by implementing agreements and by starting to address the fundamental issues of the conflict.

Solutions are urgently needed to the political impasses both among the Palestinians and in Lebanon. The Secretary-General encourages leaders in both contexts to overcome their differences and to find a way to move forward that serves the best interests of their respective peoples. Lebanon, as its people know all too well, can ill afford any further deterioration in the situation. For many Lebanese, ugly spectres of the past have again begun to emerge. All sides have a shared responsibility, in our view, to resolve their political differences through the democratic process and in a peaceful manner, in order to spare their respective populations further anxiety, further insecurity and further turmoil.

Prospects for a wider regional dialogue must also be cautiously monitored and the door should remain open to discussions that may lead to wider regional and comprehensive peace. The Secretary-General has discussed with many interlocutors both the opportunities that now exist to make genuine strides towards peace and the very real obstacles that must be overcome. He considers next week's meeting of the Quartet to be an important opportunity to chart a way forward for re-energizing the peace process and implementing all relevant Security Council resolutions.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Gambari for his briefing.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.5625

Security Council

Distr.: General
29 January 2007

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 5625th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 29 January 2007, at 10 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 29 January 2007, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 5625th meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

"The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Edmond Mulet, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MINUSTAH.

"Members of the Council, Mr. Mulet and representatives of participating troop-contributing countries had an exchange of views."

07-22366 (E) 290107

United Nations S/PV.5626

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5626th meeting

Tuesday, 30 January 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Jenie
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Soler Torrijos
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Bader
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hoare
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott Sanders

Agenda

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

Special report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2006/992)

Report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2007/33)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

07-22544 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

Special report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2006/992)

Report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2007/33)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2006/992, which contains the special report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea, and document S/2007/33, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Members also have before them document S/2007/41, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, China, Congo, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Slovakia, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1741 (2007).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.15 a.m.